■ BUSINESS / B2-1
Get to know the chair of the world's local bank

■ NEWS/ A2
Not all ConCom members favor no-polls scenario

■ WORLD / A8
WTO negotiators agree to end farm export subsidies

■ ENTERTAINMENT / A2-1
'Da King' has not left the building

Magician probes Jesus' miracles, affirms faith

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE—NASHVILLE ILLUSIONIST Brock Gill never figured Jesus for a master magician.

As an evangelical Christian, Gill always accepted the biblical accounts of Jesus' miracles as just that—miracles.

But when the British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC) asked him to travel to the Holy Land to

MAGICIAN/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Mark Jimenez back, won't talk about Nani

By Nikko Dizon

AFTER A STINT IN A US prison, unseated Congressman Mark Jimenez is back, but he would rather not talk about the "Two Million Dollar Man."

MARK/ A20

BAKA 'DI NYA MAKILALA MGA INAANAK NYA!

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Meralco: We don't owe gov't ₱42-B

'Takeover plan sending dangerous overtones'

MANILA ELECTRIC CO. is contesting the claim of a top Malacañang official that it owes state-owned National Power Corp. P42 billion, which he wants converted into equity in Meralco to bring down electricity costs.

"Meralco has not recognized any liability arising from the 10-year contract for the sale of electricity (CSE)," Elpi O. Cuna Jr., a vice president of Meralco, said yesterday in a statement.

Cuna was reacting to yesterday's banner story in the INQUIRER, which said Napocor could use the P42-billion debt as leverage to take over the distribution company and reduce electricity rates.

The takeover of Meralco, a publicly listed company, was one of the options the Malacañang official had presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo in a July memorandum to settle the dispute between Napocor and Meralco.

Meralco's franchise area covers Metro Manila, the provinces of Bulacan, Rizal and Cavite, and parts of Laguna, Quezon, Batangas and Pampanga.

Another option proposed by the memorandum was for the government to bind Meralco to a deal requiring it to pay the debt by asking the company to issue promissory notes.

Napocor claims that the debt represents the amount of power

MERALCO/ A6

SR. MARIANI Dimaranan: No prison large enough or evil strong enough to stop people's march to freedom. PDI PHOTO

Sr. Mariani, human rights fighter; 81

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

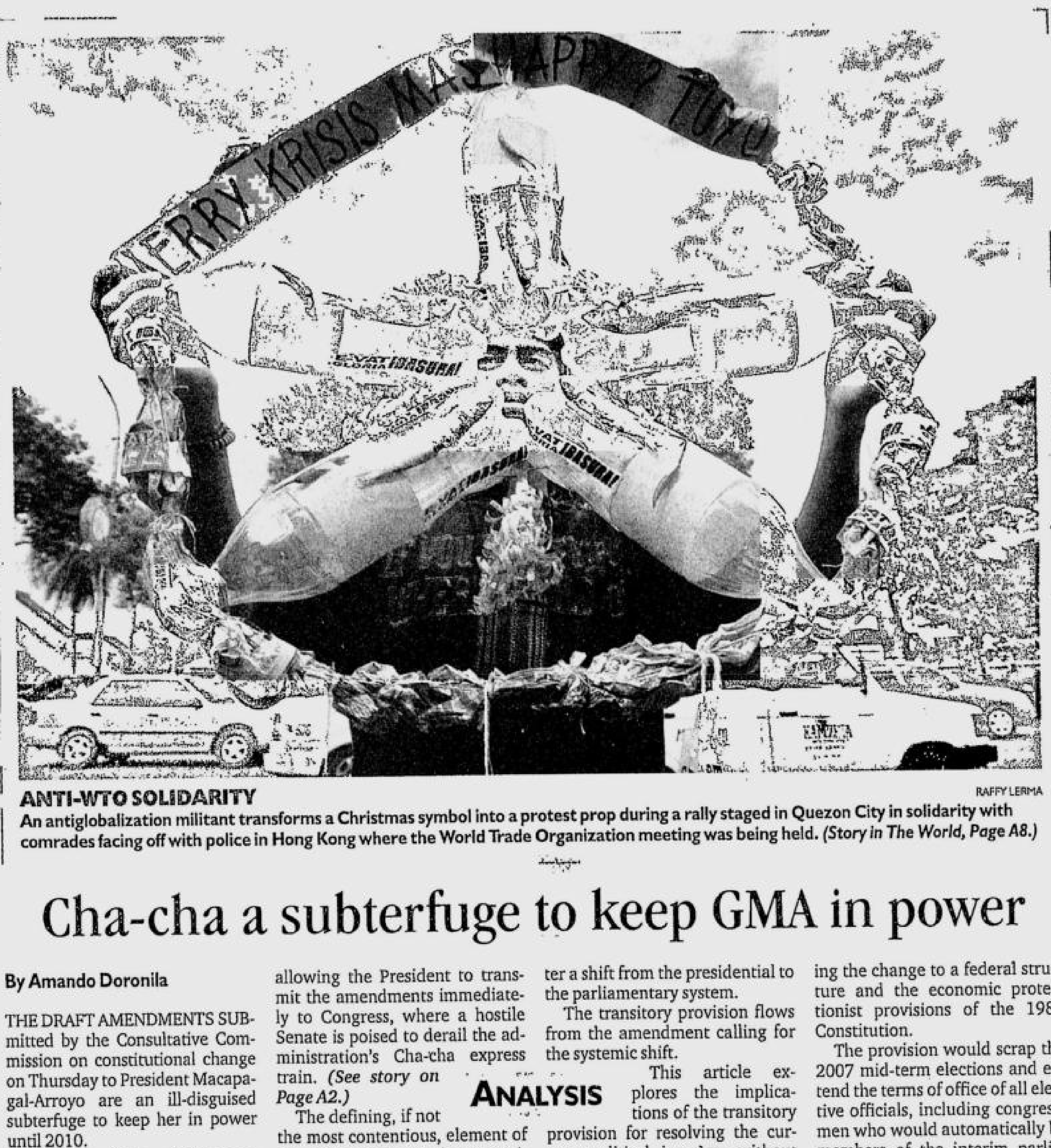
A PILLAR OF THE HUMAN rights movement in the Philippines and a strong voice and steady light during the dark days of the Marcos dictatorship has passed away.

Sr. Mariani Dimaranan, who headed Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP) for almost 20 years, died Saturday. She was 81.

Sister Mariani had been confined to her sickbed during the past year because of a series of strokes. But major heart surgery almost 10 years ago did not prevent her from continuing with her work among victims of human rights violations, especially with their families.

A member of the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception for more than 50 years, Sister Mariani was also among the founders of the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates and the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace.

SR. MARIANI/ A4



ANTI-WTO SOLIDARITY RAFFY LERMA
An antiglobalization militant transforms a Christmas symbol into a protest prop during a rally staged in Quezon City in solidarity with comrades facing off with police in Hong Kong where the World Trade Organization meeting was being held. *(Story in The World, Page A8.)*

Cha-cha a subterfuge to keep GMA in power

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

THE DRAFT AMENDMENTS SUBmitted by the Consultative Commission on constitutional change on Thursday to President Macapagal-Arroyo are an ill-disguised subterfuge to keep her in power until 2010.

The commission, which began working on the draft in August, beat its deadline in record time, allowing the President to transmit the amendments immediately to Congress, where a hostile Senate is poised to derail the administration's Cha-cha express train. *(See story on Page A2.)*

The defining, if not the most contentious, element of the draft is the transitory provision which would allow the President to finish her six-year term after a shift from the presidential to the parliamentary system.

The transitory provision flows from the amendment calling for the systemic shift.

This article explores the implications of the transitory provision for resolving the current political impasse, without prejudice to discussing at another time other key proposals, including the change to a federal structure and the economic protectionist provisions of the 1987 Constitution.

The provision would scrap the 2007 mid-term elections and extend the terms of office of all elective officials, including congressmen who would automatically be members of the interim parliament. This is intended to over-

CHA-CHA/ A7

Yes, Virginia, there are little Santa Clauses

By Gerry Lirio

IS THERE A SANTA CLAUS?

Eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon asked that question of a US newspaper editor 108 years ago.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus and today he lives in the hearts of five young girls in the Philippines. They are playing Santa Claus to children suffering from cerebral palsy, a disorder affecting brain and body coordination.

The five girls, three of them daughters of expatriates, are Paula Bianca Blomquist, Jessie Ho, Morina Fafunwa, Tara Tambunting and Claudine Fernandez, all Year 11 students at British School Manila in Global City, Taguig. They are 15 years old, except for Tara, who is 16.

This week, the girls, all from rich families, will visit the children at the Philippine Cerebral Palsy Inc. on Sacred

LITTLE/ A20

LETTER Brigade members Tara Tambunting, Claudine Fernandez, Paula Bianca Blomquist and Jessie Ho cheer up a young cerebral palsy patient and her mother. RUDY ESPERAS

Luzon folk keep alive Misa de Gallo traditions

By PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and PDI Central Luzon Desk

MISA DE GALLO OR THE NINE-day *Simbang Gabi* (dawn Mass) is an occasion for Filipinos to strengthen their spirituality and bond as family and to enjoy the scents, sights, sounds and taste of Christmas.

In northern and Central Luzon, various traditions, including a nine-day novena, accompany the celebration of the *Simbang Gabi*. *(See related story in Across the Nation, Page A17.)*

Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said the pre-Christmas novena was introduced to farmers during the Spanish era.

He said the farmers then had no time to go to Mass during the day, as they were working in the fields, or at night, as they needed to sleep early for the next day's work.

"So the friars introduced dawn Masses (at 3, 4 or 5 a.m.). But the difference between the Masses introduced by the friars and the modern-day Masses [would include] the [Mass] offering," he said.

In the days of the friars, the offerings consisted of the farmers' produce. In Pangasinan, farmers would offer salt or fish, while those in the Ilocos would give tobacco.

"Now, the offering is not exactly farm products. When I said Mass in San Carlos City, I got a lot of imported fruits, a towel, glutinous rice and catfish," Cruz said.

He said there were parishes, especially those in the cities, that hold early evening Masses (instead of at dawn) "because city residents have to go to work early."

Cruz said the Masses "have a social dimension" as neighbors, families and friends get together. After the Mass, they partake of *puto bumbong* (steamed glutinous rice) and *bibingka* (rice cake).

In Pampanga, wars and natural

LUZON FOLK/ A22

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: At 2 p.m. yesterday, tropical depression QUEDAN was estimated at 410 km west of Puerto Princesa City, Palawan with maximum sustained winds of 55 kph. It was forecast to move southwest at 19 kph. Tail-end of cold front affecting Eastern Luzon.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/12/19/05

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Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

1,000 Filipino maids join anti-WTO rally

By Blanche S. Rivera

HONG KONG—ABOUT A THOUSAND Filipino domestic helpers working here yesterday took part in protest actions against the World Trade Organization as the sixth WTO ministerial conference drew to a close. *(See related story on page A8)*

Taking advantage of their lone day off for the week, the maids assembled at Victoria Park and Charter Road, along with Filipino farmers, fisherfolk, economists and lawmakers who flew in from Manila for the anti-WTO demonstrations.

"We have already been holding fora for domestic helpers a few weeks before this. They understand what misery the WTO could bring to them, and they really reserved this day off for the rally," Dolores T. Balladares, chair of United Filipinos in Hong Kong, told the INQUIRER.

She said some 2,000 Filipino workers were supposed to join the rally but only 700 turned up at Victoria Park due to the violence which erupted Saturday night when Koreans and a handful of Filipinos tried to ram through the Wan Chai Convention Center, site of the conference, prompting police action.

Balladares said many Filipino helpers became apprehensive after they learned that police had detained hundreds of Korean activists. Others were barred from joining the rally by their employers.

"We work here. If anything happens, the police can always come for us. That's why we told the organizers that we would not be part of any disturbances," Balladares said.

The domestic workers were among at least 5,000 protesters from the International League of People's Struggle and Our World Is Not For Sale, two of the biggest networks of anti-WTO groups staging separate mass actions since the conference's start.

Indonesian domestic helpers also massed at the park, reinforcing their countrymen's small contingent of protesters.

The marchers bravely faced Hong Kong police already agitated after protesters staged Saturday night's most daring and aggressive protest since the WTO meeting opened on Dec. 13.

"It was even more fantastic than Seattle. They were very disciplined and determined. It was the closest any anti-WTO rally has ever been to any ministerial meeting," Josua Mata, a veteran of the Seattle, Cancun and Doha meetings, said of the Saturday night demonstration.

The small Filipino group decided to march in support of Korean farmers who had gone ahead and were reported to have clashed with police. They were stopped on Hennessy Road, but were allowed to proceed later.

20 ConCom members oppose no-el scenario

By Christine O. Avendaño

NOT ALL MEMBERS OF THE 55-MAN PALACE-created Consultative Commission (ConCom) had agreed on no elections in 2007 as contained in the transitory provisions of the Charter-change recommendations they submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo last week.

A minority group, consisting of 20 ConCom members, had opposed the inclusion of a no-election scenario for 2007 in the final report because this would be rejected outright by the people who might see it as a bribery for elective officials whose terms of office would be extended.

These members signed a "collective position paper on transitory provisions" of the ConCom report and submitted it to ConCom chair Jose Abueva.

In their position paper, the group said the cancellation of the May 2007 election will not be accepted by the people and "could be construed as an attempt to entice our national and local officials to push for the passage of the revised Constitution, in a myopic view that our officials are only desirous of ensuring their political tenure."

The group said the no-election proposal was "not only an insult to our public officials but, more importantly, it is an affront on our people's intelligence."

"It is therefore imperative that these sections of the transitory provisions must be rejected and stricken out," the three-page report said.

The 20 commissioners who signed the minority report were Noel Cariño, Angelo Abarico, Andres Bautista, Joji Ilagan-Bian, Jarius Bondoc, Pablo Garcia, Nelia Gonzalez, Rita Linda Jimeno, Gonzalo Jurado, Liberato Laus, Alexander Magno, Emily Marohombsar, Jose Sonny Matula, Democrito Mendoza, Vicente Paterno, Cecilio Seno, Betty Lourdes Tabanda, Efraim Tendero, Rey Magno Teves and David Tirol.

Cariño described the inclusion of the no-election proposal as a case of "a barrel of good initiatives being spoiled by one rotten apple."

Abueva yesterday admitted he shared the view of the minority group.

By not holding the 2007 elections, he said the people would not be given the chance to choose their leaders in the Interim Parliament.

In the first voting, Abueva said those favoring elections in 2007 won, with an 18-16 vote turnout. A second voting was held and this time, Abueva said those favoring a no polls in 2007 won, with a 22-19 vote turnout.

In a phone interview, Abueva said he accepted the majority decision and, thus, was standing by the entire report.

"As a reformer, commissioner and chair of the commission, I will campaign as hard as I can for Congress to accept the proposals and campaign for the ratification of these proposals," he said.

Of the 55 commissioners who voted on the entire report, 35 supported it, five were against it, one abstained, while 14 were absent.

In their report, the minority group also noted that the Constitution bars persons making revisions to the Charter from enjoying benefits created by the provisions revised.

"The members of Congress acting as a constituent assembly cannot therefore pass a provision that will benefit them," they said in their report.

Crossing partylines, senators on Saturday branded the ConCom report as unacceptable.

Sen. Joker Arroyo claimed the ConCom report was a "copycat" of the 1973 Constitution of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and thus would not have the support of Congress.

Abueva, however, refuted Arroyo's claim. "It's a very inaccurate and unfair description."

Malacañang yesterday appealed to lawmakers to give the ConCom recommendations a chance to be discussed and deliberated in Congress.

"It would be unfair at this point to raise harsh judgments and negative speculations over the work of the commission members who generously gave of their time, expertise and whose only wish was to contribute to the brighter future of the country," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

House Deputy Speaker for Mindanao Gerry Salapuddin and Rep. Mauricio Domogan of Baguio City said the contents of the ConCom report were mere "recommendations." *With a report from Michael Lim Ubac*

Ka Roger: Truce still a possibility

LUCENA CITY—COMMUNIST rebels' spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal has offered a glimmer of hope the New People's Army might still consider a Christmas ceasefire with government troops.

Rosal said the recent declaration by Luis Jalandoni, a top official and spokesperson of the National Democratic Front, the communist umbrella organization, that the NPA had no intention of calling off its tactical offensives against the Philippine military this holiday season was "not yet final."

"The NPA will be the one to decide and declare whether there will be a Christmas ceasefire or not. And there is no decision yet. We will still wait for the order," Rosal said in a mobile phone interview yesterday.

In Hong Kong on Saturday, Jalandoni assailed the military for its continuous attacks against leftist civilians.

Rosal said he shared Jalandoni's observation that the prevailing situation in the country was not favorable to the cessation of armed hostilities, a tradition in the past.

"The fascist forces continue to attack innocent and unarmed civilians. Because of their continuing losses from our Red fighters in the battlefields, they now vent their ire against helpless civilians," he said.

Malacañang, meanwhile, is awaiting the military's advice whether or not it should declare a ceasefire with the communist rebels in observance of Christmas, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Christine O. Avendaño*

On weekend, 'transition president' goes malling

By Luige A. del Puerto

BEREFT OF MASS SUPPORT AND without an army or a Cabinet to speak of, the "president" of the self-styled revolutionary transition government spent the weekend hitting a few golf balls, praying and malling with his grandchildren.

Former Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat is preparing for another round with the Arroyo administration, this time in the courtroom.

"I met with our lawyers yesterday to prepare for countercharges against (Justice Secretary) Raul Gonzalez," Abat said on the phone.

The group's counsel had said they were considering filing charges of illegal arrest and arbitrary detention against the police and justice officials who ordered their clients' arrest.

On Friday, the Justice Department formally charged Abat, former Budget Secretary Salvador Enriquez, former Ambassador Roy Señeres and lawyer Carlos Serapio with inciting to sedition. All four posted bail of P12,000 each and were released the same day.

After posting bail, Abat spent time with his kin, some of whom arrived from the United States to be with him during Christmas.

The Abat family went to Mass yesterday.

"He played golf at (a nearby) driving range this morning. It was practice, driving at a range rather than on the field. Then we went to Mass in Greenhills and had lunch in a Japanese restaurant. Now he's in a mall," said Chief Supt. Jaime Caringal, Abat's son-in-law and head of the police Civil Security Group.

"We'll go to the evening Mass later and probably have pizza (for dinner)," Caringal said, adding that his father-in-law was upbeat and healthy.

Abat's daughter Pitat, who arrived from the United States on Sunday, said that while it was a planned visit, she and her family came to the Philippines earlier than scheduled to show support to her father.

Carlos Abat, a grandson, said the whole family was "behind him in his endeavors."

"All he's doing is for the betterment of the country... Let the people decide (the seriousness of his actions)," Carlos said.

At midnight Tuesday, Abat, surrounded by supporters, proclaimed the creation of a revolutionary transition government at Club Filipino in San Juan and offered himself as its leader.

Some 35 hours later, a dozen policemen came to pick them up and take them to Camp Crame where they spent the night "under restriction."

Meanwhile, former Sen. Eddie Ilarde, founding chair of Golden Eagles Society International, yesterday denounced those who made insulting remarks against Abat, calling him "just a senile person," "ulianin" and other names that "smack of ridicule and derision against millions of other older persons in this country and around the world."

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Waltermart-Makati

LUZON

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Imus Aguinaldo-Highway
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PNP brass in Australia on anti-crime, -terror tour

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE DIRECTOR General Arturo Lomibao and three other ranking PNP officials left quietly for Australia on Friday for an official visit, confident the 115,000-strong force would remain solidly behind President Macapagal-Arroyo during their absence.

PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said Lomibao and company will visit the forensic and bomb data centers of the Australian Federal Police.

Lomibao is expected back on Tuesday.

"His visit shows that we are confident and we are not worried about these so-called talks of destabilization," Bataoil said, dismissing recent coup rumors as just that.

The police, however, remain on full alert, days after former Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat established a "revolutionary transition government" at Club Filipino in San Juan. *(See story on Page A2)*

"This is an opportunity for the PNP and the AFP (Australian Federal Police) to discuss issues related to best practices in law enforcement, and to further enhance cooperation and collaboration between the two police forces in fighting transnational crimes, particularly counterterrorism," Bataoil said of Lomibao's visit.

The Australian Police will also brief Lomibao about existing technology available in the fight against terrorism.

With Lomibao are Rodolfo Tor, head of the Directorate for Plans, Senior Supt. Romeo Ricardo, chief of the antiterrorism Task Force Sanlahi, and Chief Insp. Reynaldo Rosero, deputy chief of the PNP Bomb Data Center.

Bataoil said the police would likely remain on full alert as the Communist Party of the Philippines celebrates its 37th anniversary on Dec. 26.

The police are also bracing for the anniversary of the December 2000 Rizal bombings. *Luige A. del Puerto*

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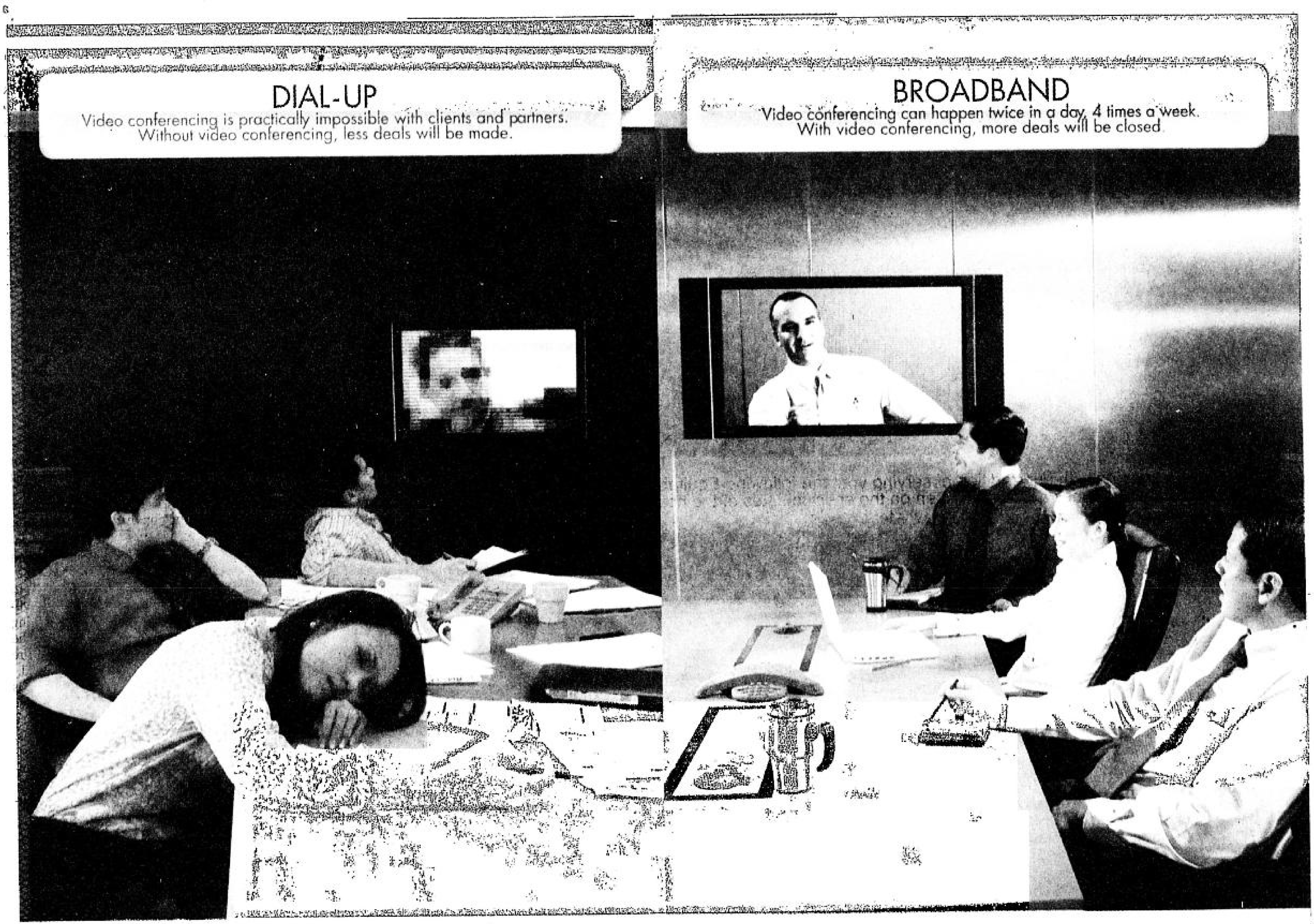
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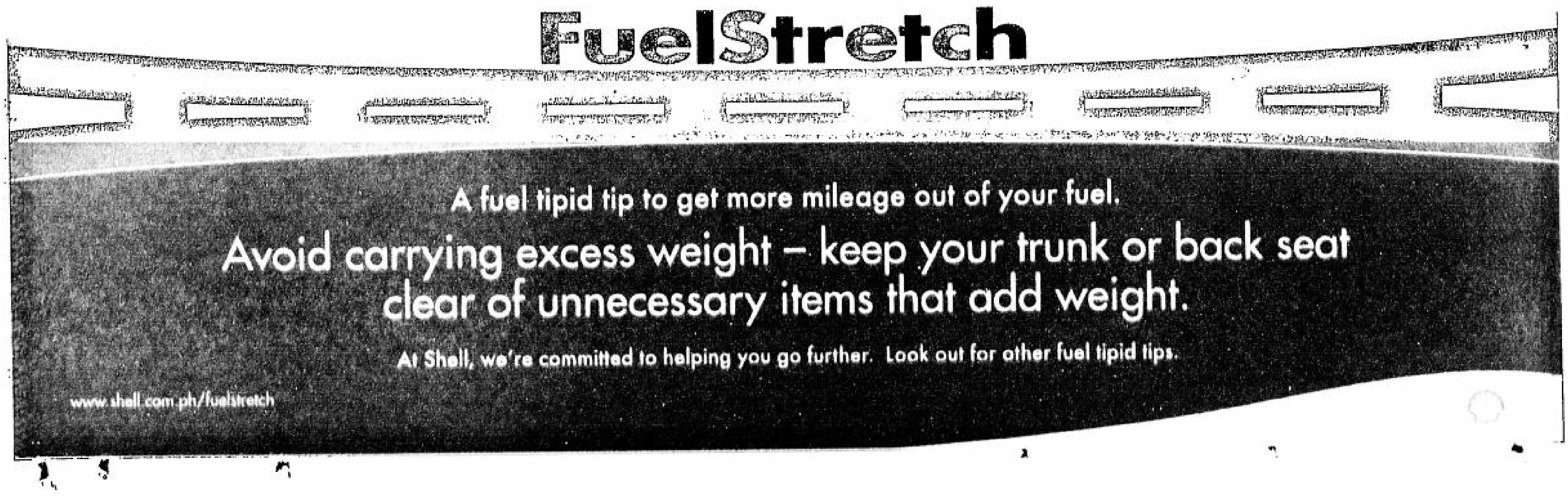
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Sr. Mariani, human rights fighter; 81

From page A1

"No prison is large enough, or evil strong enough, to stop a people's forward march to freedom," she used to say.

Sister Mariani had herself experienced being a political detainee in 1973. During a raid on St. Joseph's College in Quezon City, soldiers found in her room reading materials they regarded as subversive. The nun, who was teaching social science and history at the time, reasoned out that she needed them for her classes. The soldiers took her away.

Sister Mariani was among the first religious to be thrown into prison. She was interrogated again and again for many days, but she never broke. Later, she enjoyed sharing anecdotes about her prison experience.

"Dimaranan!" she recalled how the prison guard would bark to summon her for interrogation. The sound of it was enough to send shivers down her spine.

Sister Mariani and her fellow detainees tied strings on their fingers and connected the strings to the door so that they would wake up if someone came in during the night to take a detainee away.

TFD and HR

After her release from three months of detention, Sister Mariani headed the TFD, which was set up by the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP) to defend political detainees under military custody and document the human rights abuses of the Marcos dictatorship.

During her watch, she visited more than 100 detention camps all over the country. She brought comfort and hope to detainees and their families and worked for their release.

During her travels abroad, she exposed the dismal state of human rights in the Philippines. She worked hand in hand with international groups, such as Amnesty International.

Sister Mariani did not confine herself to detention camps. She traveled to remote places as well. Sometime in the 1980s, she did a 16-hour trek over several mountains with this writer and human rights workers in order to reach tribes that had been threatened by "militarization" and "hamletting."

Even after her release from prison, Sister Mariani was always on the military's watch list during the martial law years. A number of her TFD workers were killed while doing their jobs.

Ideological rift

Although perceived by the military to be sympathetic to the communist-inspired Left, Sister Mariani ironically found herself in an ideological debate that set her up for ouster and almost split the TFD in the 1990s. She and the AMRSP-led TFD prevailed in the end while the hard-core members set up their own human rights group.

"It broke her heart," a close friend of Sister Mariani's who had worked for the welfare of political detainees, confided. "Where would many of the political detainees from the Left, including those now in self-exile abroad, have been without her? What a way to treat her!"

Sister Mariani's death will hopefully bring together former comrades and mend ideological rifts and political differences. Thanks to the TFD's documentation, many victims of martial rule, close to 10,000 of them of varying political persuasions, were able to proceed with a class suit against Marcos and his estate. Indemnification has yet to be granted, however.

Poor taking up arms

Sister Mariani understood why many poor people resorted to armed struggle. "*Komunista man, may karapatan 'yan* (Even communists have rights)," she once told this writer.

"You meet poor people who have been driven away from their land because of the entry of multinational corporations," she said, wiping away tears. "You meet people who eat nothing but *kamote* and they tell you, 'Sister, *mamamatay rin lang kami, mamamatay nang lumalaban. May kamote sa kaliwang kamay, may baril sa kanan* (Sister, we're going to die anyway, we might as well die fighting. With a sweet potato in the left hand and a gun in the right)."

Despite her political involvement, Sister Mariani was never known to have wavered in her religious vocation and Franciscan calling. Her fellow nuns attest to this.

A TFD executive, Sr. Cres Lucero, said: "Indeed, Sister Mariani was a woman after Yahweh's heart who, in the words of the prophet Micah, acted justly, loved tenderly and walked humbly with her God. No one can ever replace her."

Said Dr. Aurora Parong, a former TFD executive director: "She was a light when I was in prison."

She gave sanctuary in her convent and provided room and food for several weeks when this journalist had to seek refuge from military elements.

'Remarkable equipoise'

Sen. Joker Arroyo, a former human rights lawyer, said of Sister Mariani:

"Only a few had advanced the human rights agenda during the dark days of martial law as resolutely as this frail-looking, veiled nun. She displayed remarkable equipoise and moral courage in the face of the formidable enemy—the military apparatchik of the Marcos dictatorship.

"The unstated but enforced state policy during the 14 dreadful years of martial law tolerated torture. Confronted with unabated trampling of human rights, Sister Mariani kept faith with those who suffered the abuses of the military by telling the truth through the provocative presence of the TFD and its documented reports.

"We have been so enamored of great Western heroes and heroines—like Florence Nightingale, for example. Don't the young Filipinos have enough models to emulate? Our young would never know the likes of Sister Mariani. There lies the tragedy of her death."

The story of Sister Mariani's life and work are in the book published by the TFD, "Mariani: A Woman of a Kind."

For her work, she received honors, including one from De La Salle University and several from human rights groups. She was also included among this year's "1,000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize" whom women's groups had lobbied for.

The wake for Sister Mariani is at La Verna II (behind St. Joseph's College), 7, 16th St., New Manila, Quezon City. A "*parangal*" (tribute) will be held at 7 p.m. on Dec. 22.

Burial is at Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City on Dec. 23 after the 8 a.m. Mass.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, December 19, 2005
4th Week of Advent

1st Reading:	**Jdg 13:2-7,24-25**
Gospel:	**Luke 1:5-25**

In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there lived a priest named Zechariah, belonging to the priestly clan of Abiah. Elizabeth, Zechariah's wife, also belonged to a priestly family. Both of them were upright in the eyes of God and lived blamelessly in accordance with all the laws and commands of the Lord, but they had no child. Elizabeth could not have any and now they were both very old.

Now, while Zechariah and those with him were fulfilling their office, it fell to him by lot, according to the custom of the priests, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and burn incense. At the time of offering incense all the people were praying outside; it was then that an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. On seeing the angel, Zechariah was deeply troubled and fear took hold of him.

But the angel said to him, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah, be assured that your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son and you shall name him John. He will bring joy and gladness to you and many will rejoice at his birth.

"This son of yours will be great in the eyes of the Lord. Listen: he shall never drink wine or strong drink, but he will be filled with holy spirit even from his mother's womb. Through him many of the people of Israel will turn to the Lord their God. He himself will open the way to the Lord with the spirit and power of the prophet Elijah; he will reconcile fathers and children, and lead the disobedient to wisdom and righteousness, in order to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I believe this? I am an old man and my wife is elderly, too." The angel replied, "I am Gabriel, who stands before God, and I am the one sent to speak to you and bring you this good news! My words will come true in their time. But you would not believe and now you will be silent and unable to speak until this has happened."

Meanwhile the people waited for Zechariah, and they were surprised that he delayed so long in the sanctuary. When he finally appeared, he could not speak to them and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He remained dumb and made signs to them.

When his time of service was completed, Zechariah returned home and some time later Elizabeth became pregnant. For five months she kept to herself, remaining at home, and thinking, "What is the Lord doing for me! This is his time for mercy and for taking away my public disgrace."

Commentary

Now we move back further in time to the announcement of John's birth to Zechariah in the temple. This child too will be heralded by an angel for he is a prophet who will be great in the eyes of the Lord and bring joy and gladness to the people who wait on God. He will open the way for the Spirit to come—a midwife in the realm of the repentant heart! In Israel's history there is a tradition of angels' and extraordinary tidings of children that are born out of time, for God's work that belong to God and the people not their parents. Who do we belong to? What work does God hope that we will do for the people in our world?

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Hinting at openness, CBCP head starts own blog

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) has started his own Internet blog, hinting of a more open leadership than his predecessor.

Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo's blog is called "Reflections" and may be accessed through www.abplagdameo.blogspot.com or through the official CBCP website www.cbcponline.net.

Lagdameo's first "reflection" was the fiery speech he delivered at the 24th National Prayer Breakfast earlier this month, an event intended to begin the healing and reconciliation process among the country's warring politicians.

In the speech, Lagdameo outlined what was expected of leaders and individuals in order to achieve national transformation. Present at the prayer breakfast were President Macapagal-Arroyo, former President Fidel Ramos and other government officials.

Lagdameo urged the leaders to be accountable to the people by not sweeping "the truth under the carpet."

"Accountability means that leaders, since they know that they are the servants of the people, answer to the people, like servants to their masters," he wrote.

"They do not run away from the truth or try to camouflage it. They take responsibility. They make restitution or try to repair the damage they have done, when they have done wrong.

Observers considered the speech, delivered in booming fashion, Lagdameo's way of indicating the character his leadership intended to take in the coming months.

Lagdameo started the blog within days of officially assuming leadership of the CBCP, which counts the country's 119 bishops as its members, on Dec. 1.

His predecessor, Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, has his own blog. But it came long after he became CBCP president two years ago.

At least five other bishops have similar sites on the Internet. Former CBCP presidents Oscar Cruz and Orlando Quevedo have "Viewpoints" and "Perspectives," respectively.

CBCP vice president Antonio Ledesma, the bishop of Ipil in Zamboanga, has "Pastoral Companion," Dipolog Bishop Jose Maguiran has "The Meaning," and Borongan Bishop Leonardo Medroso, "Tidbits."

Of these blogs, Cruz's is easily the most active. It has new postings at least thrice a week. Comments are mostly on the raging political and economic issues of the day.

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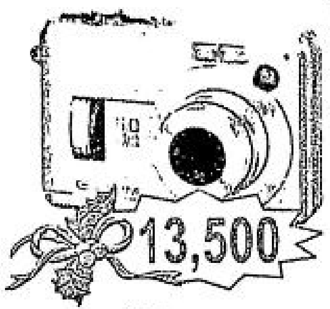

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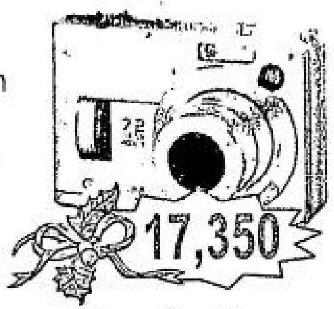

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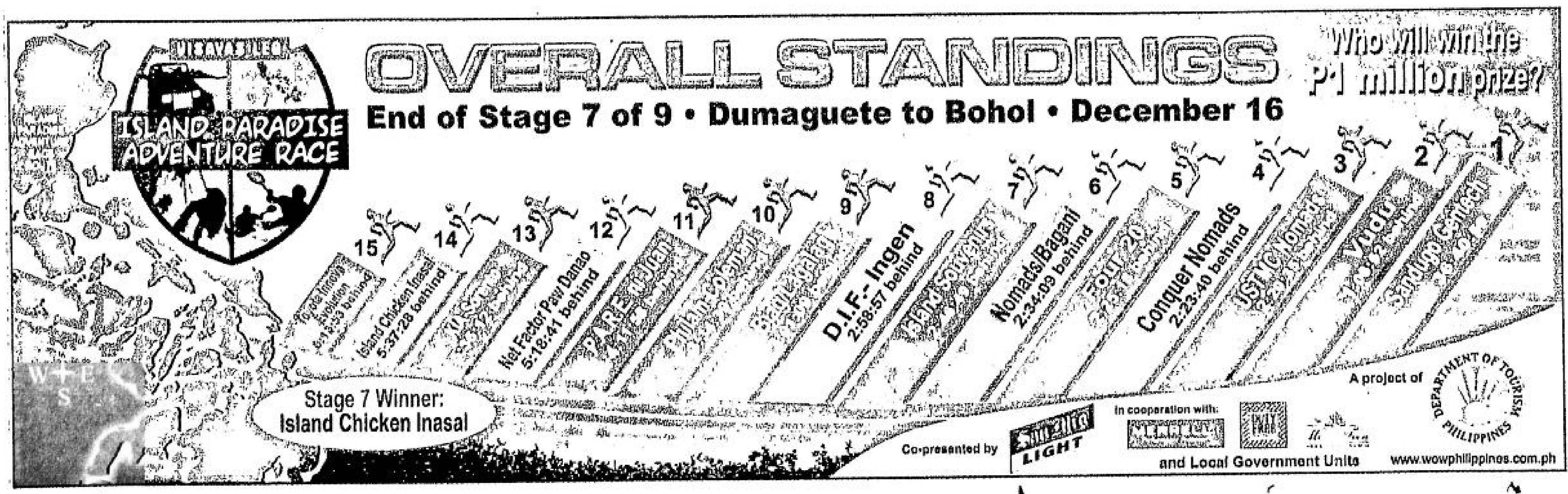

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Meralco: We don't owe gov't P42-B

From page A1

Meralco had committed to buy from it since 2001 under the terms of a supply contract signed in November 1994.

However, Meralco's purchases from Napocor had been declining over the years, resulting in higher electricity rates for consumers and more debt for Napocor. The power distribution company had been getting its supply from independent power producers (IPPs) Quezon Power Philippines and First Gas Holdings Corp.

Energy crisis

Cuna, also Meralco director for corporate communication, told the INQUIRER that Meralco started turning to its IPPs upon the prodding of the government itself during the term of President Fidel V. Ramos.

He said Ricardo Viray, energy secretary under Ramos, wrote a letter allowing Meralco to tap its IPPs for additional power at the height of the energy crisis then. "It was them (the government) who encouraged us to tap IPPs," Cuna said.

Congress gave Ramos emergency powers in the early 1990s that allowed the government to enter into negotiated contracts with IPPs.

No liability

The memorandum to Ms Arroyo claims that Meralco has acknowledged an obligation of at least P15 billion to Napocor, but Cuna, in his statement, said: "It is a matter of record that no liability arising from the CSE is recognized in Meralco's books."

While the notes to Meralco's financial statements mention the dispute arising from the CSE, which resulted in the July 2003 settlement agreement, they state:

"In the event ERC (Energy Regulatory Commission) disapproves the settlement agreement, both parties shall revert to their respective positions before the mediation. If this happens, the remedy available to both parties, pursuant to the 10-year contract, is arbitration," Cuna said.

The options proposed by the memorandum—issuance of promissory notes and conversion of debt into equity—do not hold water because there is no recognized liability, according to the Meralco official.

Cuna said the memorandum made the false claim that the second option would not result in additional costs to Meralco consumers.

"In fact, by stating that minimum charges should be higher at P42 billion, it is insisting on an amount recoverable from customers that is almost three times what is provided for under the terms of the settlement agreement of around P14.3 billion," he said.

Pain

Cuna said it was also not true that the debt to equity proposal would neither inflict pain on ordinary stockholders nor change any of the stockholder's rights and benefits accruing to the shares.

"The Meralco price share is an indication of the pain that ordinary shareholders have suffered as a result of the regulatory and judicial setbacks of Meralco. A government takeover is the button that will certainly set the share price plummeting downward," Cuna said.

Cuna said a further drop in share prices and the resulting dilution of the equity of other shareholders would cause foreign investors (a substantial block is owned by a Spanish utility) to leave the country.

The memorandum said the proposal to convert debt to equity "also opens the option of Napocor selling such Meralco shares to the public. Or Napocor may be the conduit for Meralco customers to be owners of a public utility."

"It is a puzzle how they envision to do this," Cuna said. "Meralco is a listed company and its shares are traded over the Philippine Stock Exchange. Its shares are available for purchase by any Meralco customer, or anybody for that matter," he said.

Palace view

Malacañang yesterday assured the public that any decision by the President on Meralco's debt would be within the law and "for the best interest of the people."

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye acknowledged that Cabinet officials were reviewing the different proposals on how to settle the obligations of Meralco.

"But we are not dishing out speculations until a final decision is made that would be lawful, just and for the best interest of the people," Bunye said in his weekly "View from the Palace" column.

Dangerous

Cuna said any government takeover of Meralco would send a dangerous signal to the business community.

"What is to prevent [the] government from taking over another business? Why would investors invest in such an environment? [The] government holds a substantial portion of Meralco shares. Management decisions are cleared with a board, which includes government representatives and independent directors. Is this a case of a government firm sabotaging government interest? Surely, [the] government will be hurt with a further fall in Meralco prices," Cuna said.

He said it was ironic that a government entity pictured as corrupt and inefficient would like to take on the role as the champion of the Meralco customer. "Is there a credibility gap somewhere?" he asked.

The memorandum states that "Meralco has an outstanding debt of P42 billion with Napocor based on minimum charges due for unconsumed energy levels for the period of Dec. 25, 2001 to Dec. 31, 2004."

Cuna noted that minimum charges, being in the nature of fixed costs, were recoverable from customers.

The memo puts the minimum charges at a bloated P42 billion, indicating the inclusion of the cost of fuel and other variable costs not actually incurred but also interest charges, he said.

"During the mediation proceedings that led to the settlement agreement, Napocor agreed to limit its minimum charges that will be recoverable from customers to only its fixed cost of P1.51 per kwh. A recovery at P36 billion or P42 billion will mean a gain for Napocor at the expense of Meralco customers," Cuna said.

Magician probes Jesus' miracles, affirms faith

From page A1

investigate whether Jesus could have used magic, hypnotism or some other trick to create the illusion of miracles, Gill couldn't refuse.

"I've always been fascinated by miracles, ever since I was a kid reading the Bible stories," says Gill, host of the three-hour special, "Miracles of Jesus," which will be shown on the Discovery Channel on Christmas Eve.

At the outset, the show makes clear Gill is a Christian. But Gill says he had to set aside his personal beliefs and approach such stories as the raising of the dead and walking on water with an open mind.

Skeptics

"Before I got into really doing the investigation, I did research on some of the skeptics' views and there were some quite convincing ideas. It rattled me a little bit," says Gill, a 30-year-old with a religion degree from East Texas Baptist University. "I thought, 'I really want to find the truth here.'"

Producer Jean-Claude Bragard says Gill, who could be mistaken for a surfer with his soul patch beard and long blond hair, was a natural choice for program host. Gill's act includes levitation, escaping from a sealed coffin filled with water and making coins multiply.

7 miracles

"We realized we didn't need an academic to lead the program, but we needed somebody who was interested and knowledgeable about the Scripture and particularly interested in the miracles," Bragard says.

The show uses interviews with scholars and dramatizations of Bible stories to examine seven miracles, including the multiplication of bread and fish, the conversion of water into wine, the raising of the dead and walking on water.

One segment questions whether Jesus could have hypnotized a large crowd to convince them he had multiplied bread and fish to feed everyone. In another, Gill sloshes across sandbars in the Sea of Galilee to see if Jesus could have appeared to walk on water by staying in the shallows.

In each case, the conclusion is that Jesus probably couldn't have tricked people into believing they had witnessed a miracle.

The truth

"Is it possible? Yes, it's possible that there was some type of trick because I was able to do it," says Gill, who turned water into wine during the show. "But most of those things used technology that he wouldn't have had. We re-created walking on water, but it took three 18-wheelers full of equipment to pull it off."

Bragard says the subject of miracles has "embarrassed" modern scholars of Jesus, adding: "The fact is, he was famous because of his miracles. The people then believed he was a miracle worker, even his enemies."

For Gill, who mostly performs for churches and other religious groups, delving into Jesus' miracles only strengthened his faith.

"Before this year my beliefs were based just on the Bible and what my parents and pastors had told me," he says. "Now, I'm really convinced that what I'm believing is the truth." *AP*

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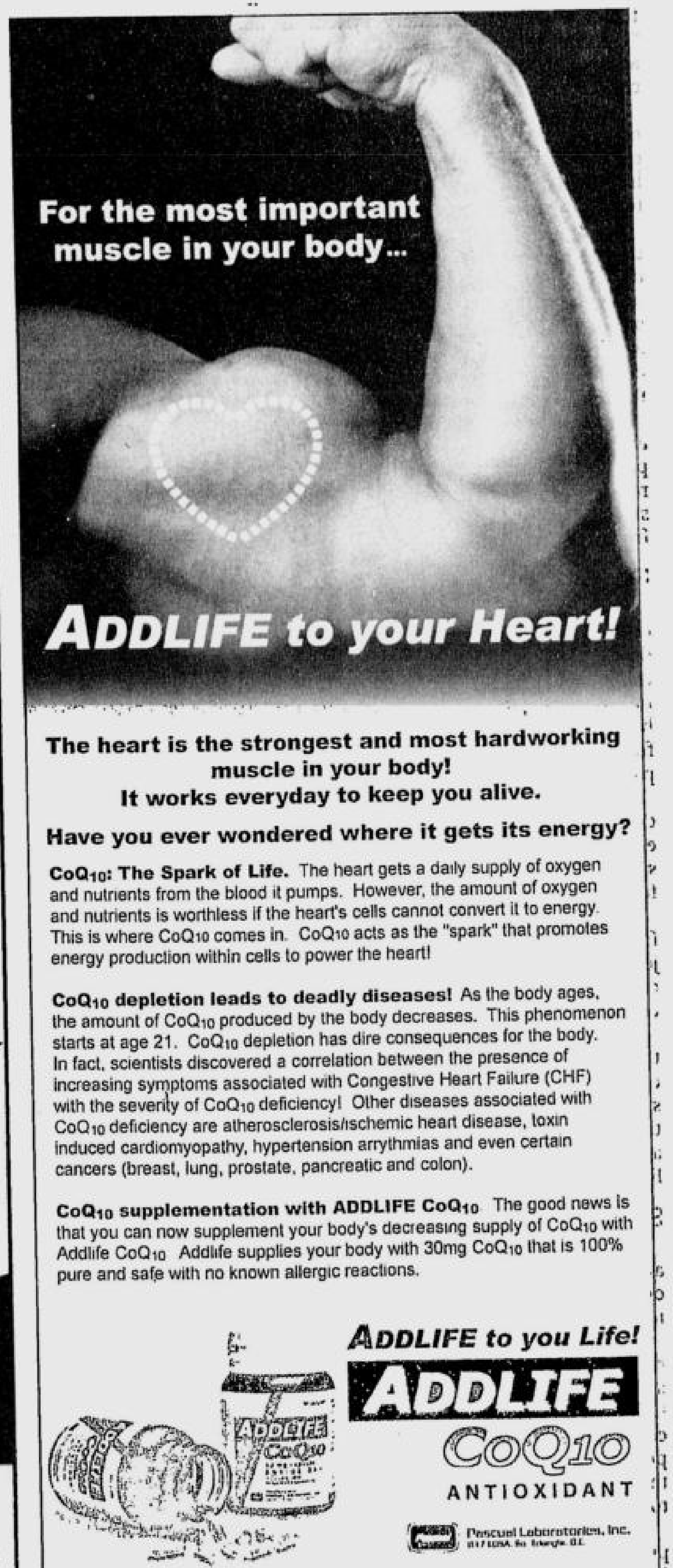

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Cha-cha a subterfuge to keep GMA in power

From page A1

come opposition to the shift, especially from the Senate which will disappear in the reform.

Under the transitional plan following ratification of the new Constitution, an interim parliament would start work from June 2007 to June 2010.

The provision says that the President until 2010 will stay as "head of state and government," with "supervision and direction" over the interim Prime Minister who will be elected by a majority vote of members of parliament.

The interim PM will be a member of the Cabinet, a third of which will be appointed to the transition parliament, together with 30 other people chosen at large for their expertise in their areas of competence.

Ambiguous powers

How much power the President will exercise as head of state and government and in supervising and directing the interim PM is unclear. This ambiguity is potentially troublesome. It is not clear whether the commission wants a strong and intrusive or a figurehead presidency.

Romela Bengzon, chair of the subcommittee on amendments and transitory provisions, explained the logic of the proposal on the completion of the presidential term. She said: "You have an incumbent President who was voted and has a mandate. You can't clip her powers. At the same time, we want to slide to a parliamentary form," so you have "to fuse this together" through a transitory mechanism.

When the President delivered her State of the Nation Address on July 25 and called on Congress to give urgency to the shift to the parliamentary system, her reason was to rescue the political system from debilitating political stalemates.

She issued the call in the midst of escalating public demand for her resignation over election rigging allegations. It came after the survival of her regime following the intervention of some allies, including former President Fidel V. Ramos, and the decision of Catholic bishops not to back the resignation call.

Draft ignores resign call

This background is recalled to emphasize the point, raised among others by Ramos, that the shift to parliamentary system is her "graceful exit" from the current crisis as much as it is a formula to avert the persistent political stalemates.

The handpicked Consultative Commission not only failed to recognize the loud public clamor for Ms Arroyo's resignation. Rather it has produced proposals that would allow her to complete her elected term until 2010.

The transitory provision defiantly waves a red cape to an angry bull. It is therefore a formula that will heighten street unrest. It slams the door to a compromise formula such as a transitory provision calling for her exit by 2007 when parliamentary elections could be held, according to the timetable of some fast-track proponents, like Ramos and Speaker Jose de Venecia.

The 2007 exit scenario appears reasonable and could defuse tensions, as the shift to the parliamentary system opens the field wider to new entrants, including those from the opposition, into the electoral arena, reinvigorating fresh leadership change.

FVR formula

The Ramos formula is freighted by the perception that he came to the aid of the President during the crisis of July and mooted a calibrated shift to the parliamentary system for self-serving reasons. The argument is that he, along with De Venecia, would benefit from the parliamentary system since it would pave the way for Ramos' return to power.

This perception has colored the views of critics who have refused to consider that the early shift to the parliamentary system offers similar opportunities to politicians aspiring for national leadership.

What has been ignored is that the Ramos formula, if examined more carefully and objectively, offers a compromise to what I would call the "soft landing" option in the current crisis.

The formula opens the way for an exit by the President by 2007. The continued stay in office of the President until 2010 would intensify the state of uncertainty that would continue to undermine the capacity of the Arroyo administration to govern effectively and deliver significant achievements.

Stalemate

The commission's transitional proposals are exclusionary and lock us in the stalemate of the crisis over Ms Arroyo's legitimacy. They have brought the country to a dead end.

In addition to their opposition to the House resolution calling for convening a constituent assembly to propose amendments to the 1987 Constitution, senators have castigated the commission's draft on the grounds that its proposals were a throwback to the 1973 authoritarian Constitution of the Marcos dictatorship.

They recalled that the Marcos Constitution provided that Marcos would be President and Prime Minister until a new president was elected and that senators and congressmen who signed the Constitution would be members of the unicameral national assembly.

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

WTO reaches breakthrough

HONG KONG —TRADE NEGOTIATORS REACHED a breakthrough Sunday on a last-minute deal, likely averting a collapse in talks that could have seriously crippled the World Trade Organization's ability to promote global free trade.

Meanwhile, about 1,000 demonstrators marched through downtown Hong Kong in an anti-WTO parade, a day after hundreds of protesters were arrested in one of the city's worst spasms of street violence in decades.

The demonstrators chanted "Sink WTO" as trade ministers from around the globe wrapped up six days of negotiations at a World Trade Organization meeting. The protesters claim that the WTO's attempts to open up markets benefit big companies and the rich at the expense of ordinary workers and the poor.

The tentative agreement, coming after all-night negotiations, calls for wealthy countries to eliminate farm export subsidies by 2013. It paves the way for a modest agreement to cut trade barriers across various sectors, according to a copy of the final draft agreement obtained by journalists.

The draft was to be submitted for approval by all 149 WTO member nations and territories later Sunday. Since the WTO is a consensus-based organization, an objection by even one member could torpedo a final deal.

But delegates appeared to be moving toward agreement.

Brazil Foreign Minister Celso Amorim said the draft was "reasonable" and hopes it will be adopted by all WTO members later Sunday.

"We welcome it," said India's Trade Minister Kamal Nath. "It is focused and it strikes at various problems of developing countries."

The 2013 date was a key demand of the 25-nation European Union, which held out against intense pressure from Brazil and other developing nations to phase out many of its farm export subsidies by 2010. Developing nations say the government farm payments to promote exports undercut the competitive advantage of poor farmers.

The revised text also sets April 30, 2006, as a new deadline to work out formulas for cutting farm and industrial tariffs and subsidies—a key step toward forging a sweeping global free trade treaty by the end of next year.

But the draft represents a far less ambitious agreement than WTO negotiators had originally hoped to achieve in Hong Kong: a detailed outline for a global free trade agreement that the WTO hopes to forge by the end of 2006, concluding the current round of development-oriented trade talks that began in 2001 in Doha, Qatar. *AP*

INVENTION WHICH NEVER TOOK OFF AP

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi enjoys a ride Dec. 16 in Tokyo on a Segway gifted him by US President George W. Bush at their last meeting in Kyoto in November. Segway has not made a splash in Japan, which bans it on public streets.

Syria behind Hariri murder, says UN prober

BEIRUT—THE HEAD OF THE UN probe into the slaying of Lebanon's ex-Premier Rafiq Hariri for the first time unequivocally accused Syria of being behind the assassination, in an interview published Saturday.

Despite repeated Syrian denials of involvement, outgoing German magistrate Detlev Mehlis who has been heading the investigation since June, showed not a flicker of doubt that its "authorities" were responsible.

Asked by the Arab daily Asharq al-Awsat if he was "perfectly convinced of Syria's responsibility in the murder of Hariri," Mehlis said: "Yes. The Syrian authorities are responsible," without giving further details.

His comments are set to further ratchet up the pressure on Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, coming just after the latest in a slew of killings of anti-Syrian critics that have hit Lebanon following the Hariri murder.

Mehlis insisted that "there is a link between the attacks that hit Lebanon" since Hariri's murder in February and the killing Monday in a massive car bomb of anti-Syrian MP and press magnate Gibran Tueni.

Mehlis, whose mandate ended Thursday and is waiting for a replacement to be chosen, accused some parties of seeking "to deviate the course of the investigation," in a reference to Syrian witness Hussam Hussam.

A former Syrian intelligence officer, Hussam initially told UN investigators that the brother and brother-in-law of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad were implicated in the Hariri murder before recanting his testimony in November.

Mehlis has released two reports since October on the Hariri murder implicating Syrian and Lebanese intelligence officers. *AFP*

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Bush admits he authorized spying on Americans, aliens

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT George W. Bush said Saturday that he had authorized the use of wiretaps on US and foreign citizens in the United States, calling the practice crucial to the "war on terror."

The admission came in an unusual live televised broadcast of his weekly radio address, in which Bush confirmed a report that he had authorized eavesdropping on overseas communications by people living in the United States who are suspected of terrorist activities.

The report, in Friday's New York Times, drew an outcry from rights groups and objections from lawmakers. For 24 hours Bush refused to confirm or deny it.

"In the weeks following the (Sept. 11, 2001) terrorist attacks on our nation, I authorized the National Security Agency, consistent with US law and the Constitution, to intercept the international communications of people with known links to al-Qaida and related terrorist organizations," Bush said.

"As the 9/11 Commission pointed out, it was clear that terrorists inside the United States were communicating with terrorists abroad before the September the 11th attacks, and the commission criticized our nation's inability to uncover links between terrorists here at home and terrorists abroad," he said.

"This is a highly classified program that is crucial to our national security," Bush said of the controversial program.

The media reports suggested that the authorization was a significant shift in the activities of the NSA, normally tasked with international spying.

The Times said the president authorized the NSA in 2002 to monitor the international telephone calls and e-mail messages of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of people inside the United States without getting the warrants previously required for internal spying.

The reports drew objections from several senior lawmakers. A prominent US senator in the president's Republican party, Judiciary Committee chief Arlen Specter, said he would launch an investigation into the matter.

"What he's doing, I believe, is illegal," Democratic Sen. Russ Feingold said Saturday on CNN television.

Bush, however, noted that he had personally reauthorized the program more than 30 times since Sept. 11 after consulting with top government legal officials, including the attorney general.

"This authorization is a vital tool in our war against the terrorists. It is critical to saving American lives," he said. *AFP*

Why are some prone to SARS, others not? Study gives answer

PARIS—RESEARCHERS IN HONG Kong have uncovered a genetic quirk that could explain why some people fell sick with SARS during the outbreak of the pneumonia-like disease in 2003 while others remained healthy.

Researchers led by Lin Chen-Lung of the University of Hong Kong carried out a DNA profile of 285 people infected with Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

The profiles were then compared with those of three groups of other people, totaling 842 individuals, who did not get infected.

Persons who had repeat sections of code in a gene called CLEC4M were 30 percent less likely to catch the disease, they found.

The protection only occurred, though, among people who had the repeats in both chromosomes for this gene.

CLEC4M encodes a protein known as L-SIGN, which is a cellular receptor—a binding site on the surface of the cell.

The researchers believe that, among those with the CLEC4M protection, the intruding SARS virus sticks to the receptor and is eventually degraded.

L-SIGN is found in the liver and lymph nodes. It has been implicated in previous research into infection by the hepatitis C virus as well as the AIDS virus.

SARS killed about 800 people in an epidemic centered on Hong Kong and China before it was mastered by contain-and-control measures, including quarantines, health checks on travellers and distribution of face masks.

The research is published online on Sunday by Nature Genetics, part of the London-based Nature group of journals. *AFP*

45 dead in stampede for food

CHENNAI, INDIA—AT LEAST 45 PEOPLE, mostly women, were killed and more than 50 injured Sunday in a stampede for food coupons at a flood relief camp in the southern Indian city of Chennai, police said.

More than 3,000 people affected by floods had gathered at a government school in the Tamil Nadu state capital to collect food coupons early Sunday, an official said.

"The toll has now risen to 45. Around 50 people are injured. Around 30 people have been taken to the hospital, of which a few are very seriously injured," a police official, who declined to be named, told AFP.

"There may be more casualties."

The relief center was scheduled to open at 7:30 a.m., but people gathered hours earlier fearing there would not be enough coupons to go round.

"Suddenly it started raining heavily and there was a mad scramble to get in. As the lock on the main door snapped, those in the front got crushed by the jostling crowd behind them," said witness Dhanalakshmi, who uses only one name.

Most of the victims were women, police said. Heavy rain was hampering rescue work.

Two of the city's main hospitals, Government and Royapettah, where the injured have been taken, were swamped by policemen and angry relatives.

Women wailed in the corridor of the Government General Hospital while policemen taking the dead to the morgue looked shaken.

At the site of the stampede one person recounted a lucky escape.

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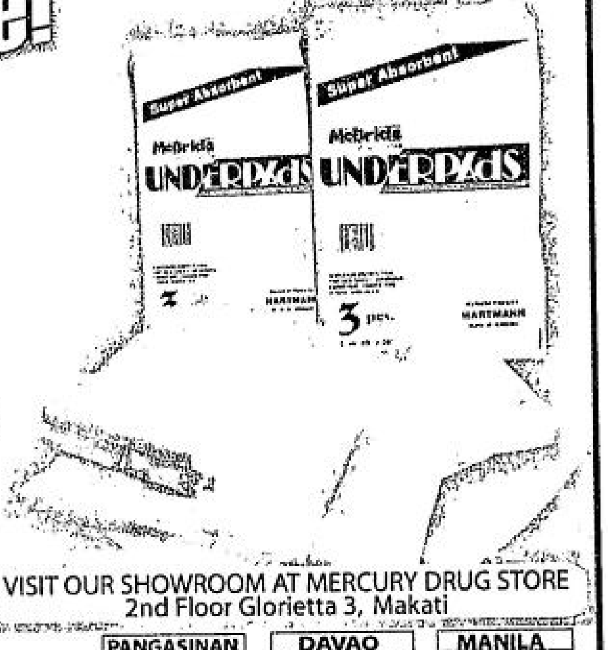

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Violence returns to Iraq

BAGHDAD—AT LEAST 10 IRAQIS WERE killed as violence picked up on Sunday after Sunni and Shiite politicians appealed for unity in government following a landmark election conducted in relative peace.

Five policemen were among those shot dead or blown up in a string of attacks in or north of Baghdad, medical and security sources said.

Gunmen killed Dhiab Hamad al-Hamdani and his son Munah, the uncle and nephew of Khodr Hassan al-Hamdani, a local Kurdish party leader, in the disputed oil city of Kirkuk, police said.

In central Baghdad, Ali Karim al-Assadi, a Shiite member of the Badr Organization, the former military wing of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, was shot dead late Saturday, a security source said.

SCIRI is the largest Shiite party and leads the main United Iraqi Alliance coalition, which is tipped to win a sweeping majority in the Shiite south when the results are finalized from Thursday's general election.

Despite days of relative calm amid a massive security clampdown in place for the election, the Iraqi branch of al-Qaida has warned the minority Sunni Arabs against being lulled into a false sense of security by the polls.

"We say to our brothers: Do not be fooled by what you have heard of the propaganda from the crusaders and their footmen," the group said in a statement on the Internet.

The group, which is led by public enemy number one, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, threatened to continue its attacks.

"The coming days will show you the fate of this 'democratic marriage' and the marriage of prostitution that it celebrated," it warned.

More than 15.5 million Iraqis were called to the polls on Thursday to elect the first full-term, 275-member parliament since the fall of Saddam Hussein in April 2003.

The fallen Sunni elite, who largely boycotted a vote for a transitional assembly in January, flocked to polls Thursday to elect a full-term parliament and boost their political representation over the next four years.

President George W. Bush, whose approval ratings have slumped over the rising US body count in Iraq but who hailed the election as a victory, was to give a speech from the Oval Office later Sunday to lay out the way forward in Iraq.

Official results in the election for the first full-term parliament since Saddam are not expected for at least 10 days.

MPs will then appoint a president and two vice presidents, who will have 15 days to name a prime minister, who must form a Cabinet backed by parliament.

Leading Sunni Arab politician Adnan al-Dulaimi on Saturday called for a coalition to protect national unity in a new parliament and thanked insurgents for not attacking polling stations during the vote.

"We will work toward finding a strong coalition in the national assembly that can protect the rights of Iraqis," said the politician, a leader of the Iraqi National Concord Front, the largest Sunni list to contest the vote.

With foreign US officials and the United Nations appealing for the quick formation of a government that reaches across the sectarian divide, outgoing Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari also urged Sunni-Shiite unity.

"To our brothers in Mosul, Ramadi and Tikrit, I say your brothers in Najaf, Karbala and Hilla have waited a long time to work hand in hand with you under the dome of the next parliament to build the new Iraq," he announced. *AFP*

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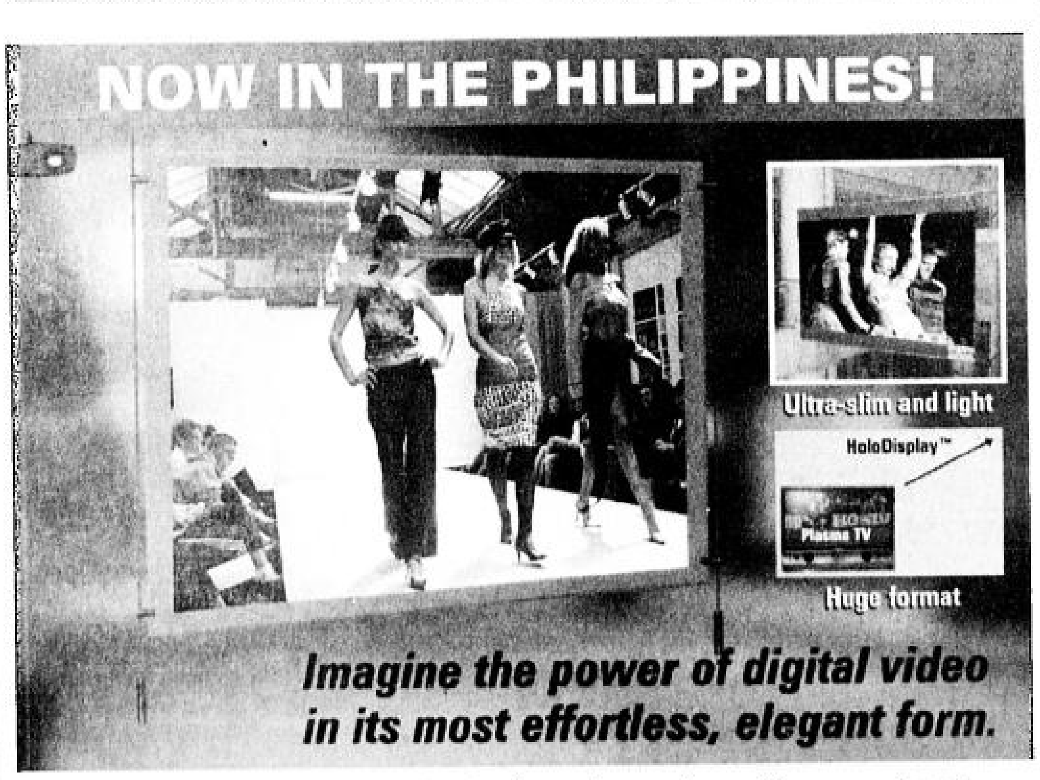

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Sydney beaches deserted amid fears of new race riots

SYDNEY—THE SUN WAS OUT, THE SURF was up, but Sydney's famous beaches were eerily deserted Sunday amid fears of a new eruption of racial violence.

Two thousand police in cars, boats and helicopters, on foot, bicycles and horseback patrolled beaches hit by unprecedented race riots the previous Sunday between whites and mainly-Muslim Arab-Australians.

In an ominous sign after police warnings that extremists on both sides were planning more violence, seven men were arrested with molotov cocktails.

Two were caught on a bus heading for the iconic Bondi beach after the driver smelled petrol and alerted police, while five others were held at Brighton-le-Sands in south Sydney, police said.

But no violence had been reported as nightfall approached.

In the middle of the summer season, with temperatures hovering around 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit), tense city dwellers who would usually flock to the beaches stayed away.

"People generally appear to have heeded the warnings not to go to the beaches we've warned them about," a police spokesperson said.

Traffic snarl-ups as police set up roadblocks and searched cars heading for flash point beaches contributed to the un-Australian shunning of a weekend of sun, sand and surf.

Lifeguards at Bondi beach and others such as Cronulla—where the violence erupted last Sunday—said the sands were no more busy than on a cold winter's day.

At Bondi on Saturday, lifeguards reported just 10 percent of the usual 20,000 beachgoers turned up, and on Sunday at Cronulla fewer than 100 people were on the beach.

Dozens of people were injured and arrested in riots after white mobs set out to "reclaim the beach" from groups of Lebanese-Australians at Cronulla the previous Sunday, sparking days of revenge attacks in which cars, shops and churches were trashed.

Surf Lifesaving Sydney spokesperson Stephen Leahy said Sunday the police presence had made a big difference in keeping the peace.

"There's a big police presence without any doubt, and obviously with cars being stopped, and the warnings that have been issued, I think it will be a very quiet day here at North Cronulla," he said.

New South Wales state Premier Morris Iemma acknowledged frustration caused by traffic jams, but added: "This is a war we have to win.

"Our response to these troublemakers is to meet force with force."

The biggest gathering in Sydney Sunday, however, was a peace rally calling for racial harmony and tolerance. *AFP*

Scientists rebuild part of mammoth genome

PARIS—IN A WORLD FIRST, GERMAN SCIENTISTS say they have reconstructed a key sequence in the genome of the woolly mammoth, enabling them to show that the extinct beast's closest modern relative is the Asian elephant.

Reporting online Sunday in Nature, the British science journal, the researchers say they devised a new technique for the feat, teasing out DNA from just 200 milligrams (0.007 of an ounce) of bone found at a mammoths' graveyard in the Siberian permafrost.

Their technique, called multiplex polymerase chain reaction, copied 46 chunks of sequence, which were rearranged to give a picture of the creature's mitochondrial DNA.

The mitochondria are an internal part of a cell that is the cell's power supply.

Mitochondrial DNA is handed down through the maternal line, and is a relatively stable genetic sequence—it changes little from generation to generation, and at a measurable rhythm.

This makes mitochondrial DNA a useful "molecular clock" that can be wound backward into time, to see how a species evolved.

By comparing the sequence with that of modern animals, scientists can spot when and where species diverged from their common ancestor.

In this case, the closest relative today to *Mammuthus primigenius* is the Asian elephant rather than the African elephant, the researchers say.

The difference, though, is not great.

African elephants branched away from the mammoth's evolutionary tree around six million years ago. Asian elephants followed suit around only 440,000 years later.

That timeline of divergence is intriguingly close to that of gorillas, chimps and humans in how they branched out from the primates' family tree.

The mammoth team was led by Michael Hofreiter of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig.

Previous efforts to recover pre-Ice Age species have run into the predictable problem of retrieving material that has not rotten after 10,000 years or more in the permafrost.

Until now, little more than 1,000 base pairs—the "letters" on the DNA code which make up the chemical recipe for making and sustaining life—have been coaxed out of these frozen samples. The previous maximum was 1,600 base pairs.

But by using their new approach to gently amplify the ancient DNA, Hofreiter's team were able to get 5,000 base pairs, even though their sample, too, was degraded. *AFP*

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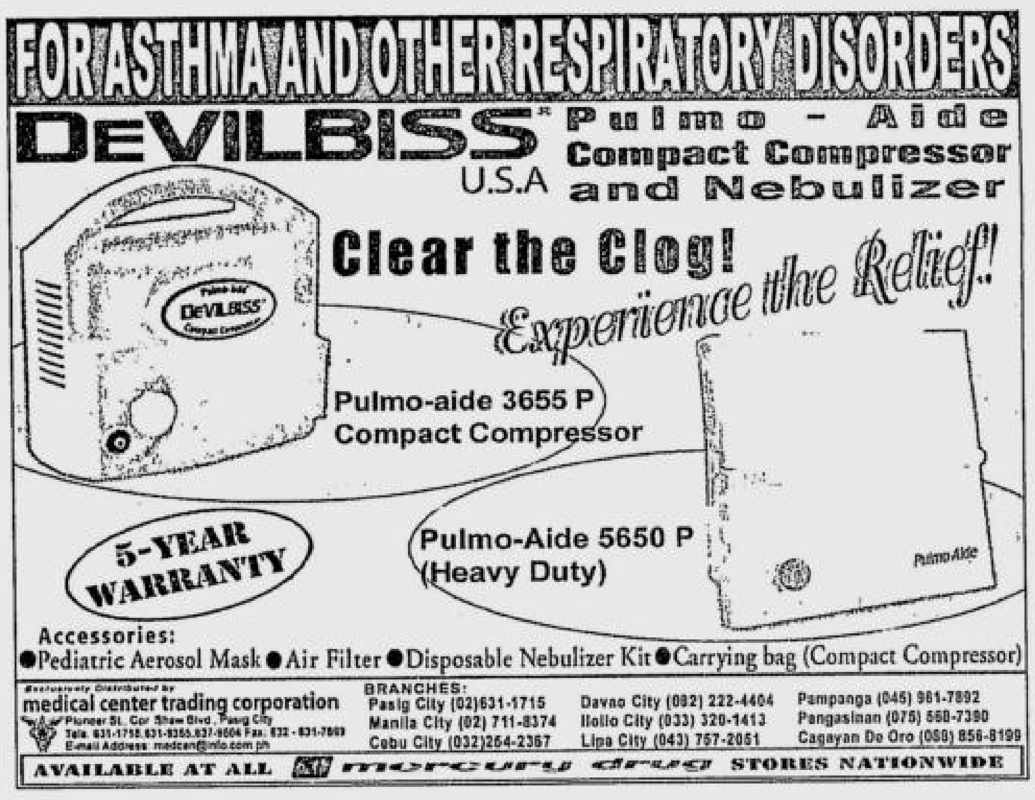

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Investigators question S. Korea cloning pioneer

SEOUL—INVESTIGATORS ON Sunday began questioning South Korean cloning pioneer Hwang Woo-suk and members of his research team amid allegations that he may have faked his landmark stem cell research, officials said.

An investigation committee, launched two days ago by Seoul National University where he teaches, said its members visited Hwang's laboratory and began interviewing Hwang and his researchers.

"Interviews with researchers and professors began at 10 a.m. Sunday, with access to the laboratories of Hwang's research team limited," the committee said in a statement.

The panel said access to the laboratories was limited to "speedily secure relevant materials" and research data for its closed-door investigation.

HWANG REUTERS

A tight-lipped Hwang showed no emoion when he arrived at the university's veterinary school for the questioning for which some 20 researchers on his team were also called in, according to Yonhap news agency.

Hwang, once a national hero, was accused by one of his collaborators Thursday of faking his research on the production of patient-specific stem cells.

Roh Sung-il, a fertility expert who co-authored Hwang's study published by Science, said the patient-specific stem cell colonies never existed.

But Hwang Friday rejected the charges, saying he had cloned 11 human embryos and cultivated patient-specific stem cell lines from them and his new tests would validate the research in 10 days.

Hwang also invited a prosecution probe, saying he suspected that his patient-specific stem cells had been "swapped" and replaced with ordinary stem cells from the fertility clinic run by Roh.

Though Hwang stood by his research, he said he had requested Science to retract his research paper due to "irretrievable mistakes in the photography" that accompanied his paper.

Stem cells refer to master cells that experts say can develop into any organ and some day may help fight cancer and other hard-to-treat diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and diabetes.

Hwang had stunned the world several times in recent years with his groundbreaking work that included cloning of the first human embryo to produce stem cells in 2004.

His breakthrough research on stem cell lines published in June 2005, was followed by the creation of the first cloned dog, Snuppy, in August. *AFP*

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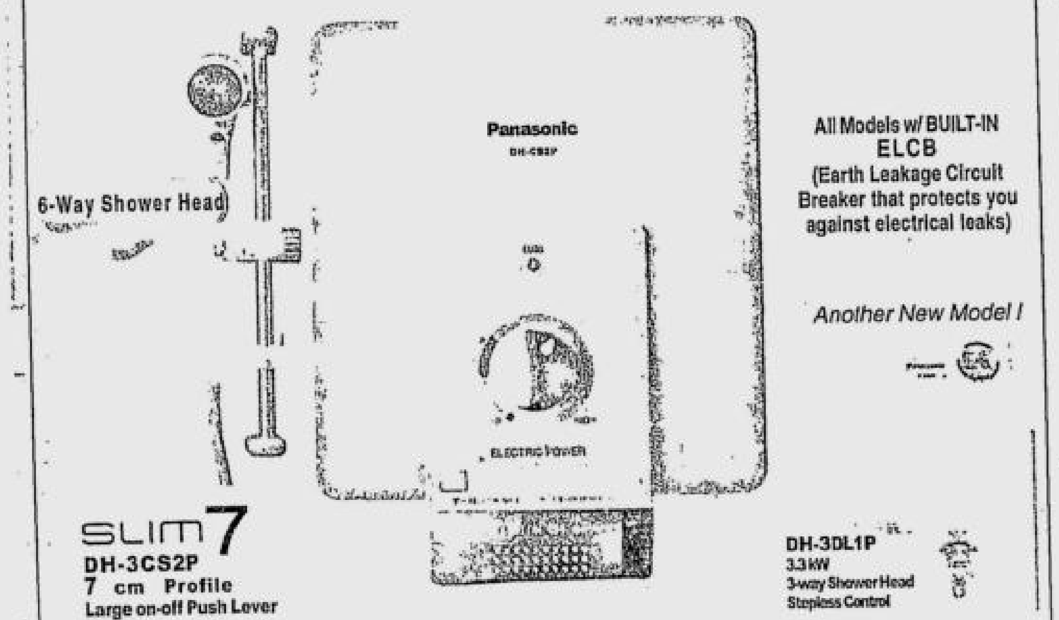

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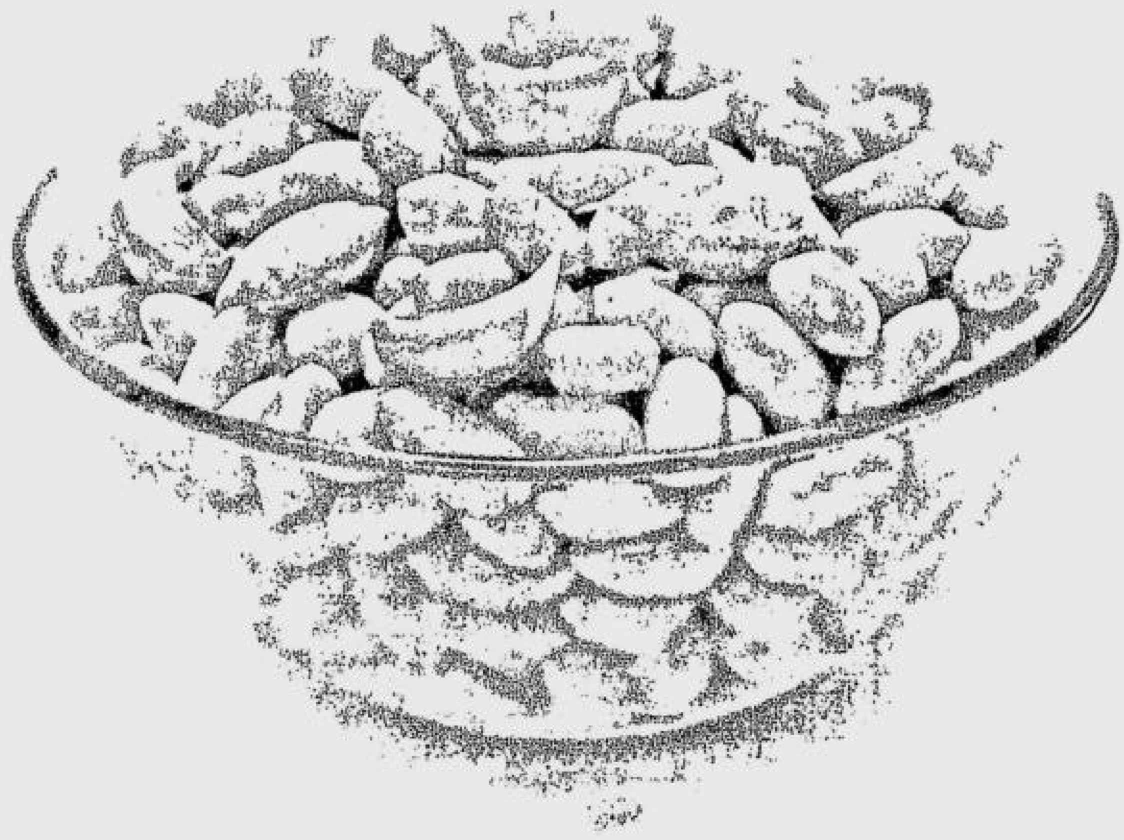

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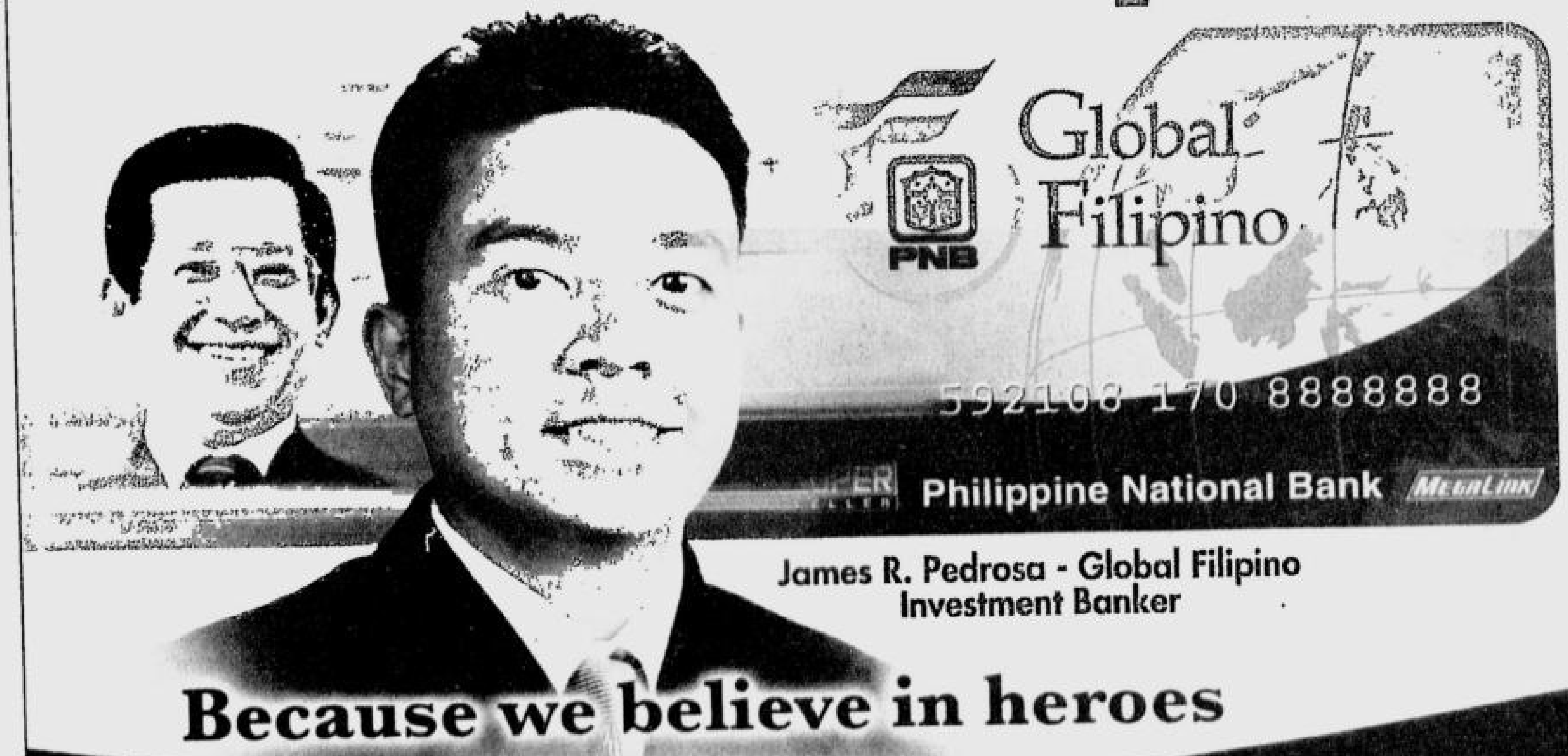

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Santas protest 'commercialized' Yule

WELLINGTON—FORTY DRUNKEN SANTAS rampaged through central Auckland, stealing from stores and assaulting security guards, the New Zealand Herald reported on Sunday, in a protest against the commercialization of Christmas.

Police said some of the Santas threw beer bottles, one tried to climb the mooring rope of a cruise ship and a security guard was punched during the fracas.

"They came in, said 'Merry Christmas' and then helped themselves," convenience store staff member Changa Manakynda told the Herald, which reported the Santas also attacked a Christmas tree.

The event organizer, Alex Dyer, had warned the antics would only stop when someone was arrested, said the Herald, which linked the incident to "Santarchy." Santarchy (www.santarchy.com) and online encyclopedia wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org) record protests going back around 10 years in the United States, with participants marking Christmas in anti-commercial manner involving street theater, pranks and public drunkenness.

Reuters

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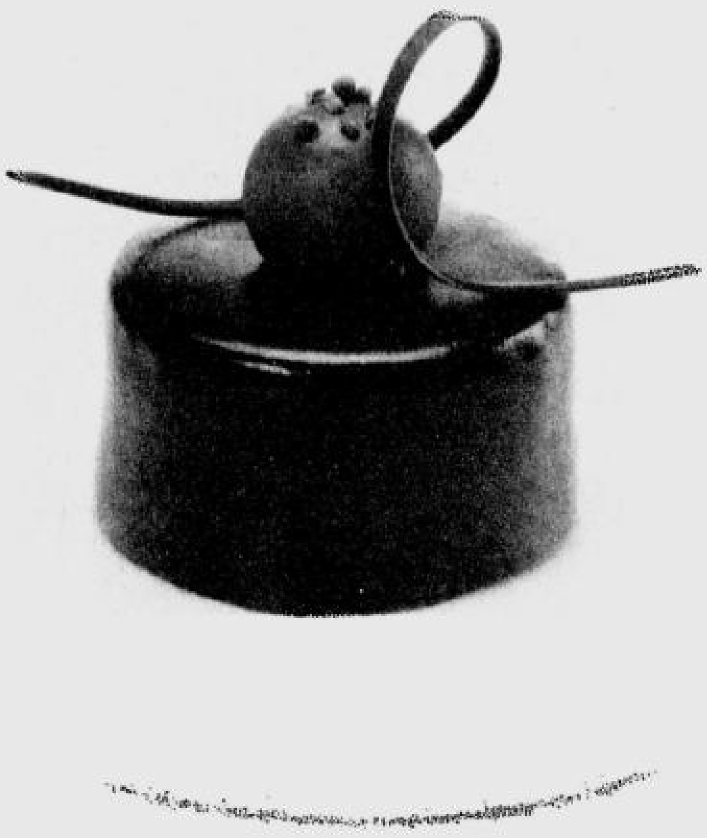

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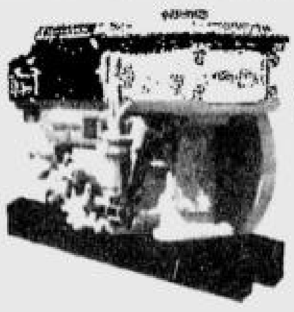

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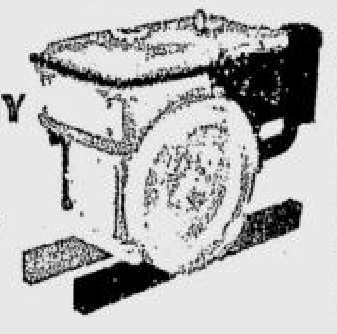

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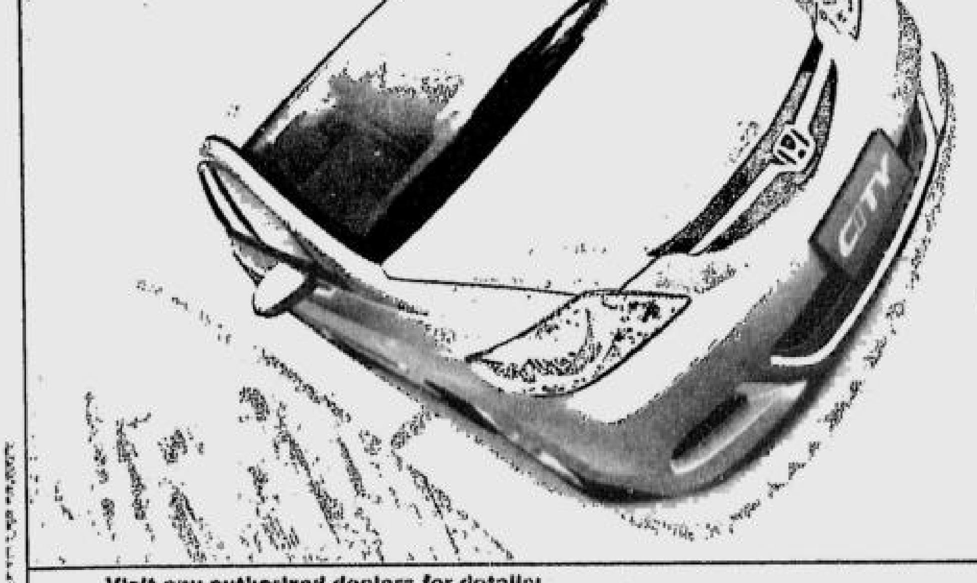

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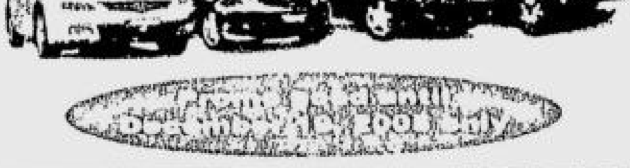

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No elections?

EDITORIAL

THE REAL HIGHLIGHT OF THE DELIBERATIONS of the Consultative Commission on Charter change came at the very end, when a majority of the commissioners appointed by the President reconsidered an earlier vote and decided instead to propose the scrapping of the 2007 elections.

In one swoop, like a rogue missile suddenly appearing on the radar screen, the ConCom entered the public consciousness. Dismissed earlier as merely a political maneuver to buy time for an administration under siege (both from the opposition and President Macapagal-Arroyo's own allies), the ConCom, or at least its set of proposals for constitutional change, has suddenly materialized before us like a menacing presence in the sky, casting a long shadow over the public square.

It must be shot down—quickly, immediately, before it can wreak damage on our democratic institutions.

Whatever good lies in the ConCom's other proposals is invalidated by the transitory provision calling for the scrapping of the 2007 elections. That provision proves that the Arroyo administration had a specific and ulterior motive for the ConCom all along: To use the constitutional change process to remain in power despite avoiding final accountability for the election fraud issue that lies at the core of the President's crisis of legitimacy.

Let us repeat that. The No-El provision is proof positive that sheer survival has become the Arroyo administration's paramount objective.

If more proof were needed, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita's fulsome praise for that particular transitory provision provides it. Last Thursday, he told reporters that the proposal looked "OK" to him. Well, actually better than merely OK. "We feel that having an election in 2007 will be very divisive and expensive." He then used the economy-poised-for-takeoff argument to buttress his point. "We are on an economic take-off and postponing the elections will give the economy the chance to sustain its growth path."

The undemocratic assumptions behind Ermita's reasoning are breathtaking in their brazenness.

Elections are divisive? They are meant to be; the solution is, and has always been, election reform: to invest the entire election process, throughout the entire election cycle, with the integrity and transparency it needs to inspire complete public confidence. What the country needs above all is a credible vote; political divisiveness lingers or even festers in part because of the lack of credibility.

Elections are expensive? They have always been, but they do not have to be. That doesn't mean that we postpone elections until we bring the costs down; that only means that we should work as fast as we can to computerize the process.

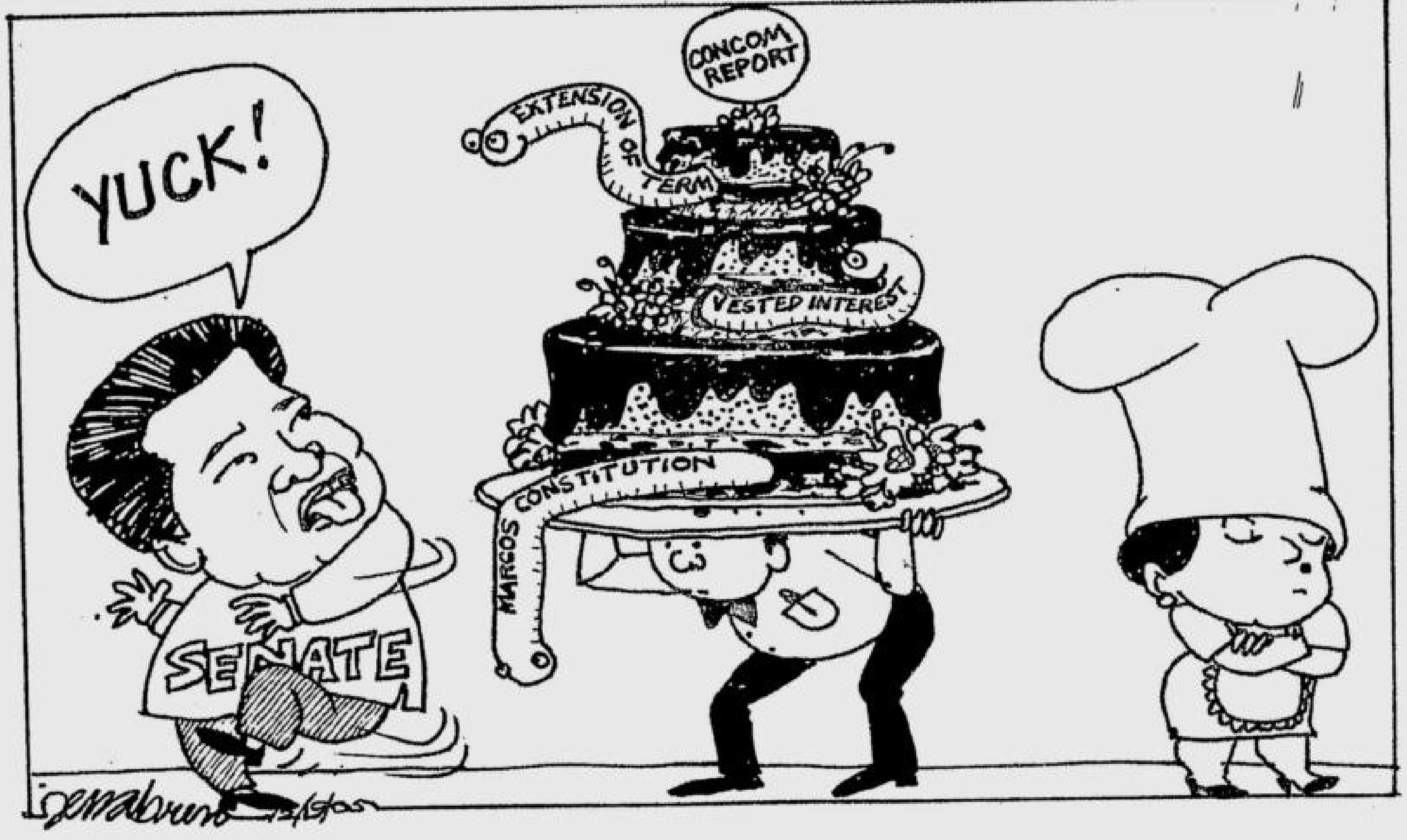
Elections are economically disruptive? That should be news to the international business community, which knows that the best guarantee of a free market is political accountability and the rule of law. In case Ermita has forgotten (it has been some time since he ran for office), elections are the primary means for holding those who hold public office to account.

But, of course, no one in Malacañang has forgotten that basic principle of democracy. That is precisely why Ermita has welcomed the junking of the mid-term elections: the Arroyo administration, neck-deep in controversy and questions about its very legitimacy, would rather avoid that moment of reckoning.

Of course, the No-El provision is also a barely disguised bribe, because today's elected officials get a free term. Instead of running again in 2007, they can sit pretty until 2010.

But the real implication of the No-El provision is that it allows the Arroyo administration to avoid accountability. Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan hit it right on the money when he described what is at stake in the mid-term elections. "The 2007 election is the only immediate constitutional authority to which the people can resort to pass judgment on the administration and its candidates. To my mind, since GMA refuses to step down, the '07 election should proceed as a referendum on her presidency ..."

A referendum? No wonder Ermita thinks of it as divisive.



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AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

GENERAL MACARTHUR WAS WRONG WHEN he said—quoting a barracks-room ballad—that "old soldiers never die, they just fade away." Obviously, he did not meet Gen. Fortunato Abat. The old soldier is 80 years old, but he not only refuses to fade away; he stays on and on to drive reigning "presidents" mad.

By announcing at Club Filipino that he had formed a transition government with him as president, he drove the government of President Macapagal-Arroyo to such panic that, against common sense, it ordered his and his fledgling Cabinet's arrest.

The Arroyo administration is committing one mistake after another, and the Abat episode is only the latest.

When Abat proclaimed himself as the transition president, people considered him and his move a big joke. Had the government not lost its sense of humor, he would have faded away after a few weeks. The media refused to give him and his group any importance and played down his story. But when the administration panicked and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez had Abat and his three Cabinet members arrested and prosecuted for "inciting to sedition," he suddenly made them headline material. Instead of dismissing Abat and company as mere "crackpots," the people suddenly found new martyrs. In a matter of few hours, a group of misguided souls, a cause of amusement, was transformed into heroes around whom people can rally.

Ate Glue has lasted this long because there is no clear acceptable alternative to her. When Ate Glue goes, who would take her place? Vice President Noli de Castro? Many people consider him as the cure that is worse than the disease. And his "no talk, no mistake" strategy is strengthening this notion. That is why, although 80 percent of Filipinos hate Ate Glue so much, they hesitate to drive her off. Ate Glue's best defenders are neither the two Gonzale(z/s)es, nor Mike Defensor, nor Gabby Claudio, nor Prospero Pichay, nor the gang of sleazeballs that infest Malacañang and the House of Representatives. It is Noli de Castro. When faced with the prospect of having Noli as the president, many Filipinos say "I'd rather take my chances with GMA."

Which may be unfair to Noli. He may not look like an improvement on GMA, but anybody is better than her. Nobody can be worse than her. GMA is a known quantity. We already know her quality, or lack of it, whereas we still don't know the caliber of Noli. He may be worse than GMA, but there is an equal chance that he may be better.

We thought GMA would be better than Erap, but she turned out to be much worse. This time, we think Noli will be worse than GMA, but he may turn out to be better. When the incumbent has a minus 30 popularity rating, there is no place to go but up. When things are this bad, the future can only be better.

But going back to Abat, he may be laughed at or painted by the administration as a misguided old fool, but he is much better than other old generals and presidents who use others to fight for them and hide in other countries while their well-laid plots are put to work. It is a known ploy of those who mastermind crimes to go abroad so they will have an alibi when their plots fail.

Is it mere coincidence that on the same day the Erap camp issues to the media its scenario for a transition government, Abat establishes his transition government; and promptly the next day, FVR, whose desire to be chief executive again is not so secret, comes home from abroad? There's another old soldier who refuses to fade away.

* * *

Speaking of another old man who refuses to fade away, there's former University of the Philippines president Jose P. Abueva who accepted an appointment as chair of the Consultative Commission. Very recently, he submitted to Ate Glue the draft of a proposed Constitution, which she immediately endorsed to Congress. Luckily, we still have a bicameral Congress, and the Senate quickly thumbed down Abueva's handiwork. Can you imagine what would happen to us if we had a unicameral parliament with the present members of the House as the MPs? That is what Abueva's ConCom is proposing.

Not only that, it proposes to ban school dropouts and actors from running for public office. This is clearly class legislation directed at the likes of Erap and FPJ. It reveals that members of the ConCom are bigots and elitists. A college degree, even a whole string of them, does not automatically clothe a person with wisdom. There have been many dropouts who turned out to be good public servants. Former Senate President and Foreign Secretary Blas F. Ople and former Sen. Francisco Tatad come to mind. On the other hand, there are many college graduates who are *bobos*. Even university presidents can be that. Look at Abueva.

His draft constitution uses bribery to entice congressmen and senators to accept it. It proposes to postpone the elections of 2007 and automatically make them, including the many third termers, members of Parliament, gratis, without having to run and spend for a new term. Isn't that bribery?

* * *

Christmas parties of the Tuesday Club and the Thursday Club will be held this week at their respective hangouts at the usual time.

There will be the usual Kapihan sa Manila (Hotel) this morning and the usual lunch at Plaridel's "Front Page" today, but there will be none on Dec. 26 and Jan. 2. Most of the people who would go there would be nursing hangovers from the previous two days of merrymaking. Regular programming will resume on Jan. 9, 2006.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE:

Priest to GMA at confession: You shouldn't only say you're sorry for lying, cheating and stealing. You should also make amends.

GMA: Yes, Father. That is why I have decided to amend the Constitution.

Abat idea

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FRANKLY, I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY THEY arrested Fortunato Abat. I confess I had started to believe he was in the government payroll. My suspicions in that direction began forming a month or so ago when he and company began tracing their political lineage to Andres Bonifacio and the Katipunan. Where I stood, it looked far more traceable to the Lapiang Malaya, the group that stormed Malacañang in May 1967.

There are some differences, of course. The Lapiang Malaya was largely a millenarian cult that advanced its cause with sign and symbol, a great deal of it religious. Abat's group is a political/military cabal that advances its cause with more secular arguments, much of them unintelligible. Valentin de los Santos' group, armed only with bolos, was cut down by gunfire—32 dead—as they crossed Taft Avenue en route to Malacañang to overthrow the government. Abat's group, armed with the *anting-anting* of conviction, has only been arrested and charged with inciting to sedition while roosting in Club Filipino. But they share the same messianic impulse, if not quixotic battiness.

None of this is to say he doesn't mean well, or that his premise, if not his solution, is not widely held. True enough, GMA is near-universally disliked, her government being seen as corrupt in the extreme. You do not need the surveys for that, the public scorn is visible to the naked eye. That doesn't mean the public will embrace any Tom, Dick, or Ato that comes along and proffers himself as the Chosen One. Even if he is armed with all sorts of vision for reform. Some people see things that aren't and ask, "Why not?" Others just see things.

Which was why I thought at one point Abat might be in the payroll of government. He wasn't hurting GMA's cause, he was advancing it. Not least by dramatizing the presumed paucity of alternatives. Why on earth should I prefer Abat to GMA—or vice versa? Abat wasn't threatening to stir the people out of their stupor, he was threatening to plunge them deeper into it. Why they arrested him, I don't know. But then put Raul Gonzalez side by side with Abat, and ask yourself who's battier.

Abat's (mis)adventure in fact simply strengthens my argument about (clean) elections as the only alternative to GMA. In a trick-mirror sort of way, Abat shows up the fundamental flaw in the call for a transitional government in all its permutations. Which is: What's to prevent anyone from saying he has the answer to the country's problems? What's to prevent anyone from saying he has the interests of the nation at heart? What's to prevent anyone from claiming he has the right to lead the nation?

That is not for anyone to say. That is not for GMA or Abat to say. That is not for you or me to say. That is for the people to say. That is what we have elections for. That is what we call ourselves a democracy for.

GMA stole the vote from the voters, let's give the vote back to the voters.

As I keep saying, by all means let's have a caretaker government after GMA. But completely transient and only to assure clean elections—not least by putting the current Comelec commissioners, chief of them Virgilio Garcillano, behind bars. That is all the extra-constitutional thing we need to do.

The constant objection to this is that it will not go far toward reforming the country. My constant answer to that is, oh, but it most assuredly and monumentally will.

Not least, it will arrest our fall from democracy, the way Satan fell from heaven. That is no mean thing. We do not have a democracy anymore, not in mind, not in body. Just last Friday, I saw again something I never thought I'd see after Edsa. One Philip Casey wrote in the Opinion page: "Let's just let the President do her job. I don't care whether she cheated or not, but had she really cheated, well, glory to her: she saved the country from still greater shame by doing so!" I leave others to unburden themselves of their emotions over this statement. Suffice it for me to say that it obviously never occurred to the writer that that is an argument not just for seizing power but for keeping it forever.

But my point is: Aren't the groups proposing an (indefinite) transitional government, not just to prepare for elections but presumably to reform the country, not falling into the same trap? Aren't they saying: "We don't care if we take over without a mandate, but if we do, well, glory to us: we're saving the country from greater harm by doing so"? Is it just me, or is no one truly noticing how the future of this country is now being debated as though the people do not exist? Contrary to rumor, the problem of who to replace GMA is not the hardest thing to solve, it is the easiest. It is to let the voters decide who to replace her.

The notion that that would only bring us to where we were, ignorant voters voting for the "wrong" candidate, is a dangerous one. The day we start thinking of the citizens as being stupid, as being unprepared to chart their own future, is the day we lay out the welcome mat to dictatorship. It is exactly the same argument our colonial masters used against us, saying they had a right to keep us in bondage because we were unprepared to be free, we needed tutelage. It is exactly the same argument sexists and bigots use against women and people of color, saying they may not be given equal rights because they are unprepared for equality, they still need time. The only thing worse than voters voting "wrongly" is that they are not allowed to vote. Or have their vote stolen from them. That is why we are where we are today.

The solution is still: Oust GMA (by people power and/or civil disobedience), and call for (clean) elections. All the rest is just Abat idea.

War on terrorism

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HAS APproved on second reading a draft law on terrorism. I must admit that terrorism is not an easy subject to handle. Hence, it is no surprise that legislators have been working on it ploddingly.

Congress is in effect being asked to "declare war" on terrorism and wrestle with a slew of new challenges for which, today, there are no clear answers. This is a matter that must be handled most carefully, especially because the law enforcement segment of the State is not known for scrupulous adherence to the finer points of the law on human rights. Knee-jerk thinking on the subject can be very dangerous, because the knees are not particularly suited to thinking.

President Bush declared war on terrorism in the wake of the 9/11 event. President Macapagal-Arroyo followed suit and she has become a staunch supporter of the Bush war. But once you begin to speak in terms of war, you must as a consequence wrestle with the problems that arise from the concept.

To begin with, Congress must decide whether what it has engaged in is a real war. This issue is a much debated point. It has been suggested that it is only a war in a metaphorical sense, like the war on drugs or the war on poverty. Fighting terrorists or terrorist organizations is not a conflict with a state. There is no clearly identifiable enemy, and when it can end is not easily seen. Neither can non-state actors be considered "belligerents" according to the traditional laws of war.

Once it is conceded that the effort against terrorism is not a real war, immediately the arsenal of weapons and actions legitimately available in a real war become unavailable. But if it is seen as a real war, or an "armed conflict" in the sense preferred by more recent international instruments, the question that must be answered next is whether the traditional rules of war are available for use by the State.

President Bush, for instance, has been authorized by the US Congress to use military force against terrorists. This by itself is not new. Military force has been used in the past against non-state actors such as slave traders, pirates, Indian tribes, the Chinese Boxer Rebellion and Pancho Villa's followers. And more to the point, the 9/11 event triggered appeals to Article 51 of the UN Charter. The article is on collective defense against an armed attack as a response to something which transcends mere criminal action.

The modern understanding of the applicability of the rules of war (*jus in bello*) is that it is not limited to an armed conflict that is of an international character. If this is accepted, will Congress and the President consider the war against terrorism as war in the sense of the modern *jus in bello* and, therefore, allow actions consistent with a state of war? An affirmative answer to this question can have far-reaching consequences.

The first consequence—it would trigger the activation of the war powers of the President as Commander in Chief.

Next, this should necessarily entail the identification of the organizations which may be considered terrorists. I suppose this would include al-Qaida and Jemaah Islamiyah. What other organizations would it cover? Would the New People's Army be included?

After having identified the organization, it would also be necessary to determine which individuals are included in those organizations. For the purpose of the detainees in Guantanamo, for instance, the US Department of Defense's order defined terrorist members as "any individual who was part of or supporting Taliban or al-Qaida forces, or associated with forces that are engaged in hostilities against the United States or its coalition partners." In this connection, it would be necessary to recall the jurisprudence on membership in a subversive organization under the old anti-subversion law. I remember reading about a judge asking, in connection with detainees in Guantanamo, whether "a little old lady in Switzerland" who contributed money to an organization that was "a front for al-Qaida" was a terrorist even though she thought she was giving money to help Afghan orphans.

If it is a war, where is the battlefield where force can be used?

If it is a war, how long can the enemy be detained? It is not at all clear when the war against terrorism can end. The traditional rule in war time is that a prisoner may be detained until the "cessation of hostilities." The obvious purpose of such rule is to prevent the combatant from rejoining the enemy forces.

If it is a war, can those who are captured be tried by military commissions? Will President Arroyo be allowed to do what President Bush has done? Bush authorized military commissions to try individuals who "engaged in, aided or abetted, or conspired to commit, acts of international terrorism, or acts in preparation therefor, that have caused, threatened to cause, or have as their aim to cause, injury to or adverse effects on the United States, its citizens, national security, foreign policy, or economy"; and those who knowingly harbored any of these individuals. Under this order, Bush authorized the military commissions to try these individuals for "any and all offenses triable by military commission that such individuals are alleged to have committed."

These are some of the questions that can arise in relation to the war against terrorism. But if the laws of war are not considered applicable, then we fall back on the peace time rules for criminal prosecution. Are they adequate for dealing with the terrorist enemy?

Education revolution

COMMENTARY

Eugenia Duran Apostol

ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AFTER OUR ARTICLE, TITLED "Values education at every opportunity," came out last Dec. 13, we were gratified to hear from Supreme Court Justice Artemio Panganiban. With his note was a hardbound copy of the book "Teaching Exemplars."

Roberto Eugenio Cadit, program director of Public Education on the Rule of Law, wrote the book's compelling foreword.

"Teaching Exemplars" is unique because it spells out in expert detail the teaching of the rule of law to our country's young minds, from Grade I to Grade IV.

This book was made possible by the Lawyers' League for Liberty through the generous support of the Asia Foundation, the US Agency for International Development, and the World Bank. The support was coursed through the Judicial Reform Support Project of the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

"Teaching Exemplars" is among the many contributions coming from the private sector, well-funded corporate foundations and even from cash-strapped but well-meaning private citizens who are eager to help improve the overall quality of Philippine public education.

Another comes from Toyota Motor Philippines Inc., which has embarked on a joint project with the city government of Sta. Rosa, Laguna to build new classrooms for the local public school.

Also this week, principals from 50 public schools in Batangas province, led by senior division superintendent Emma Bautista and Dr. Alice Pañares of the National Educators Academy of the Philippines, underwent the Foundation for Worldwide People Power's (FWWPP) Mentoring the Mentors Program to reinforce their sense of mission, sharpen their teaching skills and share their experience with other faculty members of their respective schools.

There is, too, PJ Lhuillier Foundation's partnership with Computer Assisted Learning Philippines (CAL) and the Department of Education to meet the computer education needs of first and second year high school students of the San Manuel High School in Tarlac, under the DepEd's Adopt-A-School program.

The US-based Tupperware Children's Foundation recently donated P6.5 million for children's welfare to various Philippine social development groups. According to Tupperware Philippines president Jose de Jesus Buenrostro, his company's donation was meant to sustain programs "designed to protect, support, teach and empower children."

But perhaps the more resonant chord comes from a couple of e-mail messages.

The first is from Lee Rivera. He says, "I'm currently in Brussels Belgium for a business trip, but I believe in the cause that you are pushing through. I've adopted a child in World Vision so as to help her in her study. I would just like to ask, how can I join in your cause?"

The second is from a couple: Paz is a professor, and Ogie, a retired engineer. "How does one go about joining [the Education Revolution]? What will it take to do so and how much will it cost us in terms of time, money and effort. *Wala kaming pera pero oras, lakas, sikap, tiyaga at talino marami, po* (We don't have much money but we have a lot of time, patience, perseverance and intellect)."

Joining the Education Revolution is not difficult, but it does require a shift in perspective. Public education is a complex issue of great magnitude. It is also too big a concern to be left to government alone.

However, things look different—and a bit more manageable—at the community level. Mayor Jesse Robredo has been implementing an astoundingly successful education improvement initiative for the schools of Naga City, sustained by practically the entire Naga City community.

The same holds true for an NGO based in Negros Occidental called ESKAN, which stands for Eskwelahan sang Katawhan Negros Inc. Through strong community involvement, ESKAN has been able to help 441 schools in 19 municipalities in a variety of ways—from better facilities to teacher training sessions.

The FWWPP meanwhile is working in earnest to set up locally organized Education Working Groups to address education issues specific to their particular communities, precisely so that whatever help people like Lee, Ogie and Paz can offer are put to good use.

There is however an important point that we must raise at this juncture.

While public education is under-funded, increases in resources alone do not necessarily result in improved performance. According to the DepEd's Adopt-a-School Secretariat, corporate donations to public schools doubled from P600 million in 2003 to P1.2 billion in 2004. However, this has not led to any demonstrable improvement in school performance as measured in diagnostic tests.

The DepEd, in its new thrust, the Schools First Initiative (SFI), encourages schools to be more proactive, and move toward a system of "community governance." The SFI declaration states, among others: "Our most important challenge is to make education delivery responsive to the demands of communities ready to make these changes possible."

Scale is another consideration as important as community involvement. Since the country has 41,000 public schools, there is a need to come up with strategies to reach as many schools as possible. According to former Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus, FWWPP founding member, "while many education initiatives are good, they are not of sufficient scale to make significant change."

Despite the difficulties, I am pleased to say that the beginning of something good is just around the corner.

This coming school year, we will be setting Education Revolution 2006 in motion. This movement seeks to improve the quality of public education, particularly at the elementary level, by promoting the practice of performance-based private sector support for public schools.

The underlying intent is to mobilize the school and community to take the initiative and responsibility for improving education in their respective areas. The approach is focused on the school head, who has been empowered by law to design an education strategy relevant and responsive to the unique situation of the locality, and to lead in its implementation.

Which brings us to one of the reasons for our launching an Education Revolution: we would like you to draw inspiration—as Paz, Ogie and Lee have apparently done—from the examples we will be citing and to encourage more people to become Education Revolution advocates in their own communities.

What exactly is an Education Revolution advocate? An ancient African proverb says: "It takes an entire village to educate a child." That is what being an Education Revolution advocate is all about.

If you believe that education is the best weapon against poverty, and you are willing to take that extra step—however small—to help make the public schools in your own community a little better, then you already are one.

Now, all we need is to have somebody like you in every community.

Mother Mary and son

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Noralyn Mustafa

IN KEEPING WITH THE HOLIDAY SEASON, I earlier decided to write, for this edition, about something heartening--like how GMA-7 has redeemed local television with its wonderfully magical "fantaseryes," starting with the mystical "Mulawin," followed by the enchanting "Encantadia," and now the absolutely fantastic "Etheria." All of these I faithfully followed and watched from their first episodes, missing only those that were shut out by power blackouts. At one time, I even had to settle for the replay of the tribute to John Lennon on Starworld just to watch the second to the last episode of "Encantadia." Imagine that.

Yes, I am an "*encantadik*" because I am especially grateful to the Kapuso channel for bringing the wonder of magic and fantasy to this island, where children cannot even fantasize about such magical places like Enchanted Kingdom, and babies are put to sleep with the drones of spy planes and sounds of gunfire as lullabies; while their parents struggle to survive as subjects of the evil Kaharian ng Pidal, where the only magic is of the blackest kind.

When a couple of college students texted me asking for a comprehensible explanation of what "magical realism" is, I simply asked them to watch "Encantadia" and they understood perfectly.

Sadly, for a very compelling reason, that piece will have to wait. That is so because I get a crack at this space only every third week of the month, and urgency is usually the rule I go by in deciding on the topic I write about. In this utterly dismal and desolate kingdom that is our world under the Arroyo regime, we have been stripped of the joy of anticipation of what is known as the happiest season of all.

With incredible ruthlessness, the developments come one after the other. A bemedalled military officer, who had bolted unjust detention and openly declared his defiance of this fraudulent administration, is tagged as an "enemy of the state." A venerable man, who for the most part of his existence risked life and limb in the service of his country, is dragged off to jail under the pretense of an "invitation," when in reality he was being arrested by very ill-mannered policemen. And then the revolting photo of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Noli de Castro (fittingly seated side by side, with identical smiles that painfully reminded you of cats who had just demolished a plateful of fried *danggit*) receiving from the so-called constitutional commission a carte blanche for interminable reign, thus satisfying their hearts' ultimate desire—a reign the legitimacy of which is "constitutionalized"! You cannot imagine a more fantastic Christmas gift, not even in Encantadia.

But the reason I decided to write on another topic for this week's edition was the story (this one moved me like no other)—thankfully well covered by media—of deposed President Joseph Estrada mercifully "allowed" by the Sandiganbayan to attend his brother's funeral Mass, though he was not allowed to accompany him to his sibling's final resting place; of how before going to the wake he defied the schedule set by his guards and insisted on first seeing his frail and ailing mother, who is probably only miraculously being kept alive by the thought that she must be there when her beloved son can finally come home. More importantly, she wants to know why he is in jail.

You see, that is how and why God created mothers. The whole world may condemn the son for the most heinous crimes imaginable: murder, arson, rape, plunder, even receiving *jueteng* payola; but, for her, he will always be her innocent little boy.

And in our culture, Asian and Filipino especially, the greatest crime, unforgivable before the laws of God and man, is disrespect for one's mother.

In this season, when the whole Christian world awaits what is traditionally the birth of Christ, Erap's mother (take note, she is named Mary) can only see her son in staggered 24-hour "furloughs" permitted by the henchmen of Ms Arroyo.

Much has already been said about how Ms Arroyo has damaged our institutions and contaminated them all with her character. Not much has been made of the greater damage she has inflicted on our socio-psychological state—our value system, the traditions that give meaning to our lives as mothers and sons, as families; that bond us as communities; that make us all, of whatever race, color or creed, part of the universal chain of humanity.

In the first place, this whole mess, stripped of its legal bull, is really nothing more than Ms Arroyo's terrible fear of President Erap who refused her offer of freedom abroad. The offer was relayed by a top honcho of hers, the "2-million-dollar man," then Justice Secretary Nani Perez. But Erap opted to face instead the consequences of his refusal like a man, the way his mother Mary brought him up, no doubt.

Adding insult to injury, Mother Mary sees her son under heavy guard, as if he were a convict on death row, every breath wanting to escape from lethal injection. But the guards are with him under the pretext that they are to provide him "security." But President Erap is one who can get down from the presidential car at a busy intersection to untangle heavily tied-up traffic, as he did once, with no thought of anybody harming him. On the other hand, his jailer has to protect (in effect imprison) herself with shipping containers because of her paranoidal fear of the people of whom she claims to be the President.

In the name of all that is decent and human, release President Erap and let him go home to his mother so he can fulfill his filial obligation of taking care of her in the few remaining days of her life. Merry Christmas, Madame President.

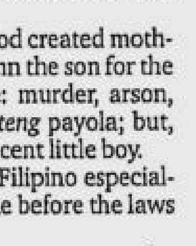
* * *

Comments to rubaiyat19@yahoo.com

Neither victory nor defeat

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



THE HOLIDAYS ARE A GOOD TIME FOR PEOPLE to exchange views in a friendly manner. A number of recent conversations have given me much food for thought. The first such conversation began with a response to a typical question: What do you think is the situation at present? I replied with my analysis of both sides, ending with my belief that try as they might, neither the President nor her opponents could quite achieve victory or inflict defeat.

The person I was talking to—no fan of the President, by the way—replied, "Ah, but you see, that is the problem. Both sides think in terms of victory and defeat."

I was startled by this response. What do you mean? I asked.

"Well," he explained, "both sides are so obsessed with getting something, that both are achieving nothing."

"Take the President," he went on. "Did you ever stop to think that those of you opposed to her, by your thinking of things in terms of winning or losing, have made it impossible for her to do anything other than what she's doing?" I confessed to remaining confused about the point the person was trying to make. The person sighed: "You leave no room whatsoever for a resolution that serves the country, and not the ambitions of particular people. Those of you wanting her to do something, the moment she did, no matter how unsatisfactory it was to you, immediately abandoned her without giving her even the tiniest bit of credit for what it took to do what she did." The person was referring to the President's apology. "And when she did say sorry, you slapped her, and not even that, declared war on her. Are you surprised that, in embarrassment and anger, she then embraced the very people that you, who oppose her, always thought caused all her troubles?"

Furthermore, the person suggested, "Having turned against her, you make no room for the possibility the President cares for the country, and worse, you leave no room for any other resolution to the crisis, other than the ending you people want. There's no half-way point. Yet you all lack the things she has: a sense of leadership, however flawed; a mandate and possession of authority, however questionable and fragile; a sense of responsibility, no matter how inconsistently displayed, to the country at large." The person proceeded to ask me to list the strengths and weaknesses of the President, and of her people, and then asked me to list the strengths and weaknesses of those opposed to her; when we both concluded, the President retained more strengths than weaknesses compared to everyone marshaled against her. The person then asked, "So you see, both sides are incapable of moving the country forward on their own, and yet you make it impossible for people of good will on either side to come together. What good is anyone doing anything, if that persists?"

Other people have come forward to gently chide me for the company I've been keeping the past few months, asking me if it's all worth it. These people aren't fans of the President either, but their views seem to revolve around the unfitness of most groups seeking to replace the President. The damning conclusion is that these flaws and lack of redeeming characteristics—as some people describe the spectacular incompetence of all the anti-GMA groups—indicate that much as they don't like the President, the country deserves it if the administration survives by default. One such person, in particular, asked me, eloquently, "How can you, people, remain so fixated on her, while ignoring the many other things reasonable people can agree on? So many things need to be fixed, whether it's the Comelec, or the serious debates necessary over the future direction of the country, and yet those against the President have done far less to chart a path out of the mess than the administration's doing."

The consensus I discovered, among people who have been trying to keep a certain amount of rationality about the crisis that's eaten up most of this year, is that the opposition to the President has dismally failed in either doing its homework, or coming up with a solution that restores confidence both in the leadership and in our national institutions. In the most recent conversation I had with such people, the conclusion was that the President's greatest weakness—which is why they, as I, remain skeptical about the chances of a turnaround for the administration—is a tremendous capacity for self-destruction. The greatest weakness of the opposition is that it remains fragmented, vicious, unthinking and irresponsible.

Returning to the original conversation I had, the person asked me, "With both sides obsessed with winning and losing, everyone is losing—and at a time when the country has obviously reached the end of one road, and needs to embark upon another! How long will this go on? To the death? And for what? The provinces are moving forward, Metro Manila is choking in its own physical and political filth, you are all shouting at each other and filled with hate, and yet your hatred blinds all of you to your own shortcomings, which means even if either side wins, it will just confuse victory with a license to throw all caution and decency to the winds."

These thoughts come from people who strongly believe there is such a thing as right and wrong; people who have no love lost for either side, and who, more often than not, agree with me that the real case against the President is not what happened before May 2004 or shortly after, but rather the cover-up and reckless disregard for our national institutions she's exhibited since June of this year. And indeed, it must be asked: what is the way out to improve the country, instead of destroying it?

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph/blog

Filipinos who do the right thing

SOME THREE WEEKS AGO I LOST my card case somewhere between the Ortigas MRT station and Robinson's Galleria. Because the sidewalk on that strip of Edsa was filled with rush-hour commuters, I naturally assumed I was robbed. Thankfully, my card case contained no cash. So I just resigned myself to never seeing my ATM cards ever again and went through the process of having them canceled within minutes of my discovery. Because I am a salaried employee, I really couldn't afford anyone, aside from myself, using my savings. Imagine my surprise when I got a call the next day from someone who had found my cards at the MRT station, arranging to return them to me.

Her name: Janet Barneza. She works for Federal Management and Maintenance Inc.

I gave her a little something for her trouble. But if the bosses are reading this, I think what she did deserves recognition, especially this season and given our general social climate. It's nice to know there are still people like Janet who go out of their way to do the right thing. May her tribe increase.

—**DAVE BERCADES,**
davebercades@yahoo.com

Fined gas station violated law on quality and safety

WE WOULD LIKE TO CLARIFY some issues raised in Al Mendoza's Dec. 7 column which appeared in the INQUIRER's Motoring section.

First, on the allegation that personnel of the Department of Energy harassed a small entrepreneur by charging him a penalty of P20,000. The penalty was imposed by order of our Office of the Legal Council (OLC) for his failure to post the Research Octane Number (RON) and the safety and informational signs (in this case, "Stop Engine While Filling" and "Switch Off Cellular Phones").

The posting of RON is required to inform the public of the quality of fuel that is compatible with a particular vehicle. The posting of safety signs is a basic requirement for hazardous business operations. The DOE cannot compromise safety. It is the DOE's mandate to protect the public against illegal and unsafe practices in the retailing of petroleum products. The random inspection of gasoline stations and LPG establishments is an exercise of that mandate.

The inspection Mendoza cited was done last May 25. The result of the inspection was forwarded to the our OLC. The DOE personnel who visited the station can't be accused of harassing as the DOE is handling the case in accordance with due process.

Second, the column claimed that the dealer was never warned. We are not clear about the form of warning that the dealer expected from the DOE. The department conducts its inspections—whether routine or complaint-initiated—unannounced. Gasoline stations that are subjected to routine inspection are selected at random. Our records show that the dealer also failed to comply with the notice and reportorial requirements of law.

Third, the dealer reportedly claimed that the DOE personnel have no proof that his station was subject of an inspection. As standard operating procedure of the DOE, the dealer or the person in-charge of the station is provided a copy of the inspection report. In this case, a certain Marilou Caadan, who claimed she was the one in charge of the station at the time of the inspection, acknowledged the report by signing it.

We appreciate Mendoza's calling the attention of the DOE to this particular incident. We would like to assure him that we will not tolerate DOE personnel who abuse their authority.

—**ZENAIDA Y. MONSADA,**
director,
Oil Industry Management Bureau,
Department of Energy, Taguig City

All talk, no action from columnists who cry wolf

PEOPLE ARE APATHETIC. CONrado de Quiros complains about that. Well guess what? Doesn't he think people are apathetic because they are tired of commentators like him, who keep on painting a dire picture of the Philippines, come hell or high water? All they do is cry wolf so that nobody minds them anymore.

I have never heard De Quiros say anything good about anybody—from Fidel Ramos down. He is such a negative guy that I don't read his columns anymore. If I would believe everything he says, I might as well go to Siberia. He makes it appear like a better place than the Philippines.

The nerve of him to say we are apathetic. It's also his fault. Why doesn't he run the country? He seems to know what to do. He's all talk, no action.

—**ANTON SY,**
ansj64@pldtdsl.net

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

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LETTERS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Wrong facts

THIS IS A REACTION TO VICTOR Agustin's series of columns. He refused to publish the replies I made:

Dec. 5—It is not true that "the Senate had voted to indefinitely ban Chavez from its grounds and any of its sessions and hearings." Only four of the 36 committees of the Senate voted (not unanimously, though) to ban me from appearing as counsel in their committees. For Agustin's information, I have been appearing before the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food, chaired by Sen. Ramon B. Magsaysay Jr.

Dec. 7—I challenge Agustin and his informant to show me proof that I have been personally found guilty (thrice at that, as he claimed) of "contumacious" forum shopping against a PNB foreclosure case. I have not received any complaint censuring me on that PNB case.

Dec. 12—It appears that Agustin did not bother to read, much less comprehend, the decisions of the Court of Appeals referred to in his column. If he had cared to, he would have readily realized that there is nothing in the decisions which found me "to have thrice violated the forum shopping rules." (He now claims "four times.") Neither is there any finding in any of the decisions that my law firm Chavez Miranda Aseoche Law Offices had "resorted to 'contumacious' tactics... to stave off the foreclosure" of a client's property. I wish to dwell more on the issues but they are pending litigation in separate cases before the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court and therefore *sub judice*.

—**FRANCISCO I. CHAVEZ,**
Chavez, Miranda
Aseoche Law Offices,
7/F Kalaw-Ledesma
Condominium, 117 Gamboa St.,
Legaspi Village, Makati City

Ridiculous and pathetic leadership

IF THE TEXT MESSAGE SAYING that the INQUIRER was unfair to Archbishop Fernando Capalla indeed came from him, then the Philippine Catholic leadership is in a worse state than I thought.

Even without the explanation of the INQUIRER publisher, the content of the text message is so ridiculous, to say the least. Archbishop Capalla and his team were correct in placing the ad in another newspaper. The INQUIRER is not the only newspaper in the country, although I am sure that Archbishop Capalla would have wanted the ad to get the same mileage as Conrado de Quiros' articles.

But asking friends and flock (if indeed the message came from him or members of his team) to stop reading the INQUIRER for that reason alone was pathetic (aside from being ridiculous).

With all the problems confronting the Filipino people (Catholics or non-Catholics), reading everything (not just the INQUIRER) we can get hold of will be—more than the so-called religious guidance—the saving factor for our country.

As a baptized Catholic, I will give up my Catholic faith first before I agree to be blind to the evil that is around us. That is what the text message is asking the Catholic flock.

My reply to this message: Congratulations to De Quiros and to the INQUIRER for exposing the "moral crookedness" in Philippine society, wherever it is found: in our slums, in our very homes, in the hallways of government, or even in those who sit on the thrones of religious hypocrisy.

—**ALAN D.R. DE LUZURIAGA,**
adluzuriaga@yahoo.com

Fire escapes, but who's checking?

MOST OFTEN, FIRE VICTIMS ARE trapped inside burning rooms or houses secured with grills. I've been advising my neighbors to put a fire escape in their rooms so as not to suffer the same fate that befell a family of seven in Imus, Cavite. One of the victims was a classmate of my son.

I think the government—especially local government units—must act on this concern. I know there is a law that makes it compulsory for lessors to equip their establishments with a fire escape, but who's checking? I think local barangay officials should go around their areas of jurisdiction and remind the people about the need for fire escapes.

Also, I would like to remind every family to check if its house is properly equipped with such facility; if not, it should install one as soon as possible for no one can guess when and where the next fire will occur.

—**LITO G. MAÑALAC,**
Block 7 Lot 11, Carnation St.,
Camella Sorrento, Bacoor, Cavite

Too much pork makes fatter pols

SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN get enormous allotments from the pork barrel, which is people's money to be used for development projects.

However, we rarely see pork benefits. All we see are rough roads, more poverty, crumbling institutions and worsening conditions. On the other hand, politicians become richer, their houses become bigger (a number of them even get to acquire mansions). And I kid you not, they become fatter.

Now, I'm not really familiar with the government's financial systems. But is there nobody monitoring how pork allotments are used? Private companies always require their employees to liquidate expenses by providing receipts.

Personally, I think the best way to monitor pork barrel disbursements is to let a private accounting/inventory firm audit the pork expenses. The government is too corrupt to let its own auditing arm monitor pork disbursements.

—**GIAN CARLO JUBELA,**
dravencarnage@yahoo.com

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Floods hit Palawan; 3 drown

THREE PERSONS DROWNED IN THE FLOODS OF SAN VIcente and Roxas towns in Palawan, according to Department of Public Works and Highways Palawan district engineer Ernest Militar.

Militar said he could not identify the names of the victims and the circumstances surrounding their deaths because they could go to the towns as they had to pass through several villages, which were waist-deep in water.

Rep. Antonio Alvarez said he had also received a report on the three casualties but did not have means to gather details.

In Oriental Mindoro, floods brought about by incessant rains since Friday have inundated most of Calapan City and Baco and Naujan towns with more than 74,000 persons, Armando Duque, Regional Disaster Coordinating Council (RDCC) Region IV director, yesterday said.

Five days of continuous monsoon rains caused the Bocayao River to overflow and damage another portion of the river's protection dike on Saturday.

Duque said more than 4,500 persons were evacuated in 102 villages in Calapan, Naujan and Baco since Friday evening.

Duque, who was in Mindoro to lead the relief operations, said five-foot deep floodwater submerged at least 30 barangays in Calapan City where 869 families, consisting of 3,555 people, had been taken to 19 evacuation centers in the city proper.

"The situation is worse than last week," Calapan City Mayor Carlos Brucal said in a phone interview. "The floods came last night (Saturday) and has reached the poblacion."

He said the last time this happened was in 1954, when floods also reached the poblacion of the then municipality of Calapan.

Rescue and relief operations were under way, and dump trucks, Army trucks, and pump boats have been deployed.

Brownout

Electricity has been shut off in the city since Saturday night. Floods, Duque added, caused the local engineering office to close the Nautical Highway from all kinds of vehicles early Saturday morning.

He, however, said floodwater in most areas was receding fast as the rainfall started to weaken yesterday morning.

In Naujan, more than 62 villages were flooded. Duque said the homes of some 34,000 individuals were flooded and 340 individuals evacuated.

In Baco, 10 villages with 4,775 persons were also inundated.

The National Disaster Coordinating Council and the Philippine Coast Guard have sent three helicopters and 15 rubber boats to the province for their rescue operations, Duque said.

He said the provincial engineering office had also repaired 10 meters of the damaged portion of the dike in Bucayao River when water coming from Mt. Halcon pounded on the damaged structure.

"The dike had suffered a bigger damage than last week's," the RDCC chair said.

He said water, which overflowed from the Mag-asawang Tubig River, contributed to the floods in Calapan, Naujan and Baco.

Gov. Arnan Panaligan said the damage in the dike is now 800 meters wide and emergency repairs could not be completed unless the rains stop.

"We need at least seven days of good weather [to] do the repairs," Panaligan said.

He said it would cost around P10 million to repair the dike and another P30 to P60 million to construct a new one in the mountain.

The provincial government has also undertaken relief and rescue operations in some barangays.

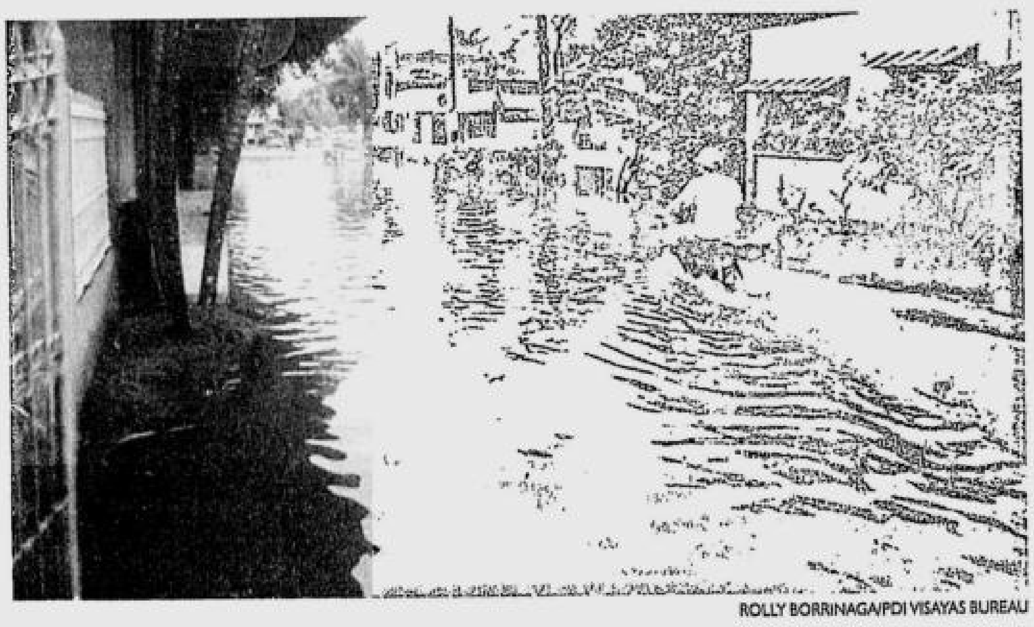
Leyte

Two weeks of incessant rains have triggered floods in six villages of Palo town in Leyte, affecting 8,556 persons.

Adriano Fuego, Office of the Civil Defense in Eastern Visayas director, said water rose to six feet in these villages.

Hardest hit was San Joaquin with 519 families followed by Cogon, 397 families; Cambungan, 210; San Antonio, 129; Cahidok, 111 families and Cabarasan Guti, 60.

"But we have already provided assistance to these affected families. We have sent some rubber boats to evacuate these families to safer grounds within the barangays and some to the municipal hall," Fuego told the INQUIRER. *Marlon Ramos, Jofelle Tesorio and Mariano Virola Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Joey Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*



ROLLY BORRINAGA/PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

FLOODWATER inundate New York Street in V&G Subdivision in Tacloban City.

Dawn Mass attendance up despite heavy rains

PANGIL, LAGUNA—THE ATtendance of dawn Mass devotees in Laguna surged despite the continuous downpour unleashed by Typhoon "Quedan," according to parish priests in the eastern towns of the province.

The priests in Sta. Maria, Mabitac, Famy, Siniloan, Pangil, Pakil, Paete, Kalayaan, Lumban, Pagsanjan and Sta. Cruz, where heavy rains occurred, noted that their parishioners continued to flock and rush to their churches in early dawn for the traditional Eucharistic celebration.

Fr. Joel Jores, priest of the St. Sebastian Parish in Lumban, said that although their huge river continued to overflow due to the heavy rains, a throng of devotees continued to fill their church to overcapacity.

Church assistant Johnny Soldevilla of the Our Lady's Nativity Parish of this town, said that as early as 2:30 a.m. to 3 a.m. young and elderly parishioners knock at the church door request entry inside the church to be sure of having seats.

Fr. Benjie Obani, Mabitac priest, said the downpour and floods that occurred in their town in the first two days of the "misa de gallo" did not dampen the spirit of their parishioners.

More and more devotees flocked to the church to fulfill their pledge for the Holy Season, Obani said.

After his Mass on Sunday morning here in his native town, Bishop Leo Drona of the Diocese of San Pablo, visited the parish of the St. Sebastian in Famy town, which was reported to be submerged in water due to the continuous rains in the past few days. *Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

4 soldiers killed in clash

ILAGAN, Isabela—AT LEAST four government soldiers were killed in an encounter with New People's Army rebels in Jones town on Dec. 15, an Army official said on Sunday.

Maj. Victor Tanggawohn, spokesperson of the Army's 5th Infantry Division withheld the identities of the soldiers pending notification of their kin.

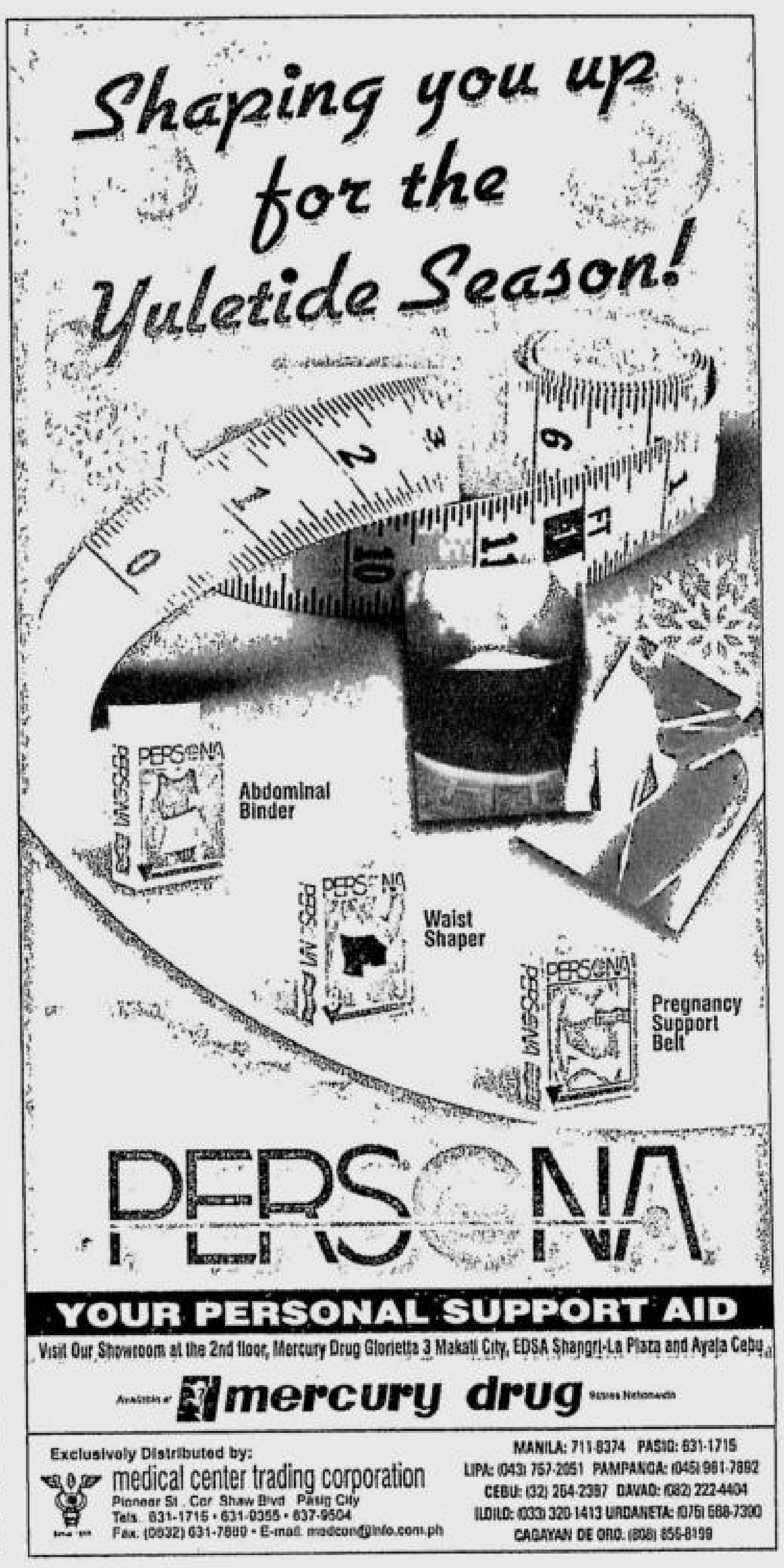
But a report from Salvador del Pueblo, spokesperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines, NPA and the National Democratic Front in Cagayan Valley, showed that at least 23 Army soldiers were killed in separate ambuscades initiated by the NPA in two villages in Jones on that day.

Del Pueblo, in an e-mailed statement on Saturday, said soldiers belonging to the 45th Infantry Battalion and the 51st Reconnaissance Company were killed in a series of ambuscades staged by the NPA's Benito Tesorio Command in Barangays Linumot and Sta. Isabel.

But Tanggawohn said there was "no truth" to the information released by Del Pueblo as only four soldiers were confirmed to have died in that encounter.

Tanggawohn said there were more casualties on the part of the rebels.

Jones Mayor Florante Raspado, in a telephone interview with the INQUIRER, also confirmed reports that four soldiers were killed in the Dec. 15 clash. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



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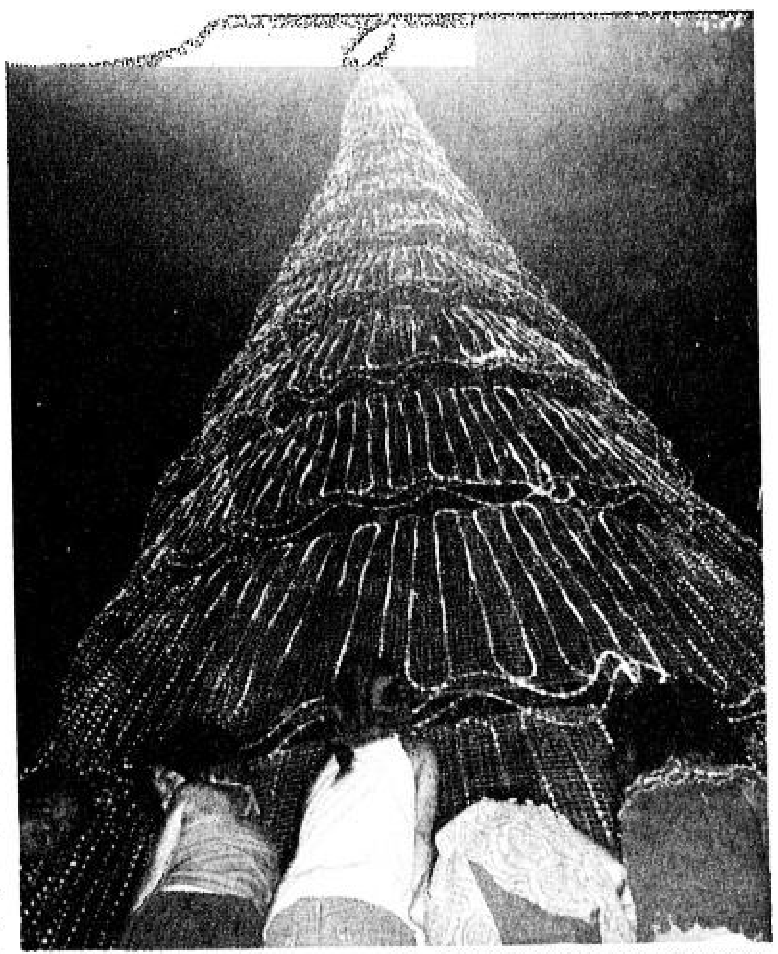
Giant Christmas tree gives joy to villagers



NIF ESUS ORBETA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

THIS 16-METER LANTERN awes / nos in Ligao City.

LIGAO CITY—Renalyn del Losa, 8, of Barangay Sta. Cruz here, said they do not have Christmas tree or any Christmas decor at home.

But seeing the giant Christmas tree at the city plaza on Sunday made her momentarily forget this and she resolved to be at the plaza every night to feel the spirit of the yuletide season.

Like her, Catalina Tuazon, 62, who came from upland Barangay Abella and waited for about three hours to see for the first time the lighting of the Christmas tree, said that glancing at the huge artificial tree made her difficulties in life disappear even for a moment.

Del Losa and Tuazon were among the thousands of villagers from this city and neighboring towns in Albay's third district who flocked to the plaza on Dec. 11 to witness the lighting of the newly refurbished 11-year-old 16-meter high Christmas tree made of steel and dressed up in multicolored bulbs, with a life-sized nativity scene.

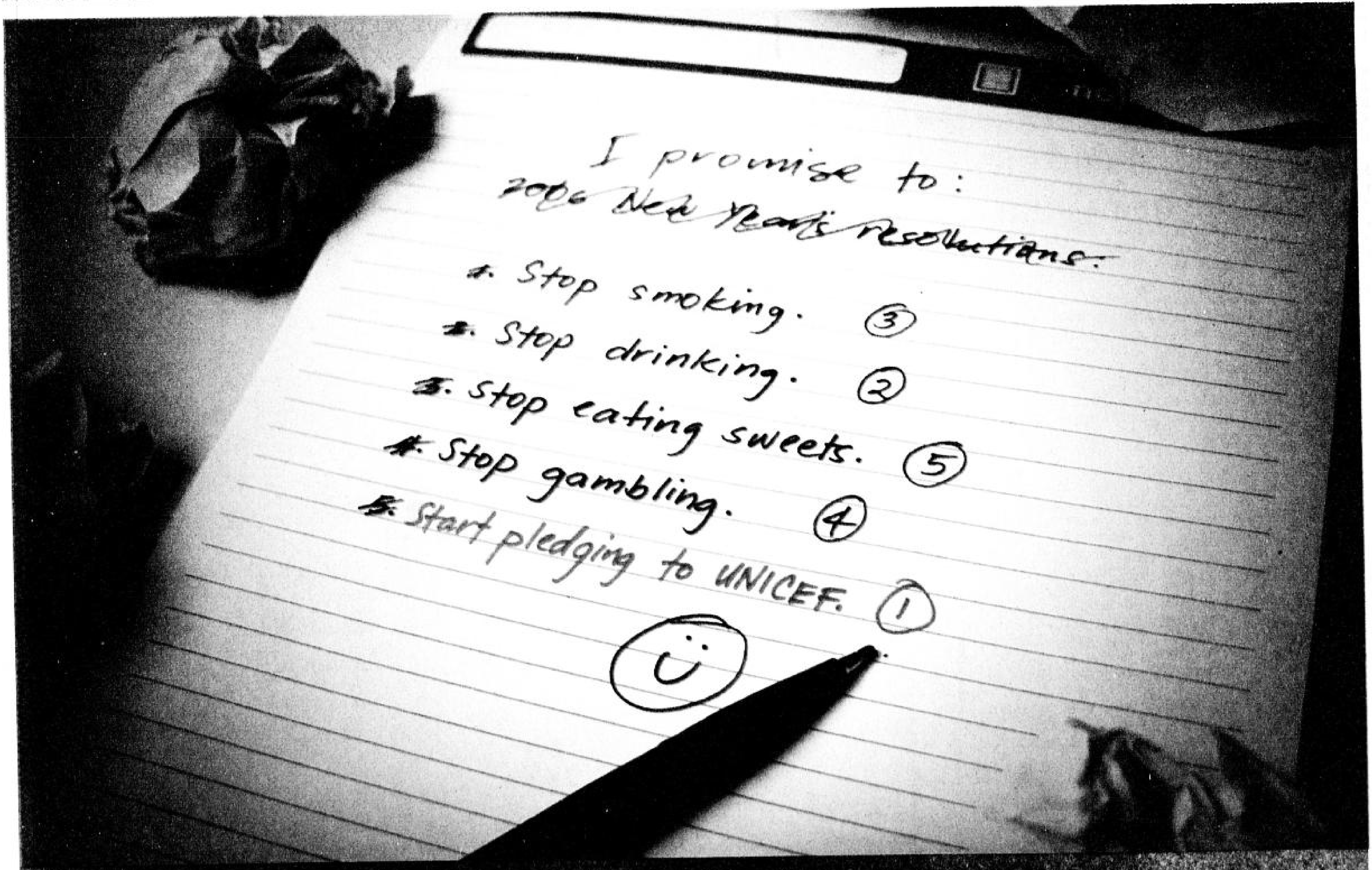
Korean national Kim Seong Lian, a tourist who learned of the event and came to witness it, was delighted to see how the huge Christmas tree brought happiness to the local folk.

He could not hold his admiration for this Filipino tradition as he viewed with awe family members enjoying the sight with joined hands.

"I notice that the Filipinos are happily united during Christmas time and with that kind of attitude, attaining peace and unity in the country is not hard to realize," the Korean said.

He was commenting on the scene of city government and village officials and spectators holding lighted candles as they sang "One Little Candle" before the tree was blessed "for the attainment of peace, love and unity in the country."

"This simple Christmas tree, which stands at the heart of the city, would serve as a liberating and healing point for the people, especially during this present economic and political crisis in the country," said Mayor Linda Gonzalez. *Michael Jaucian, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



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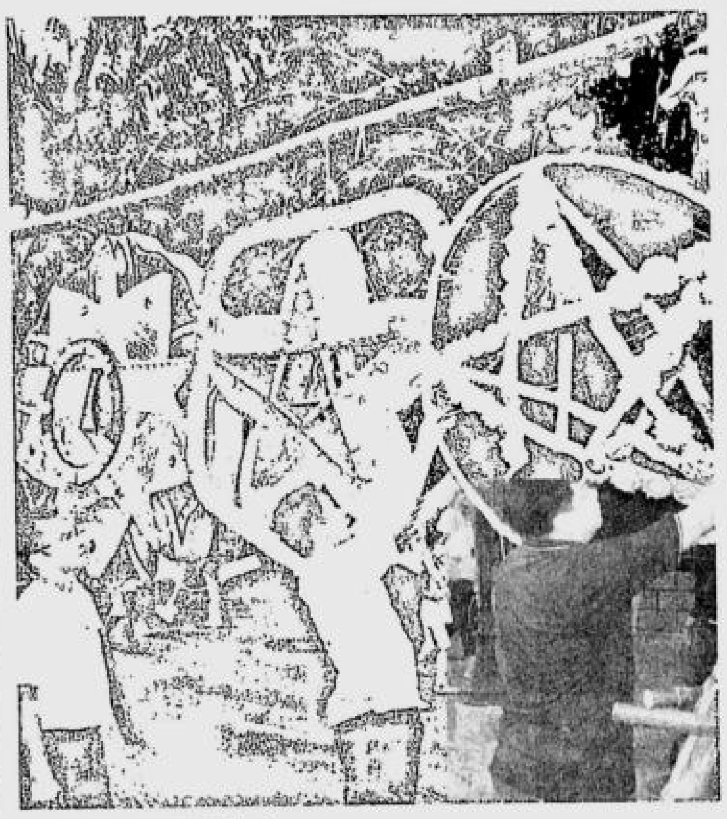


PAROL CONTEST RAY P. ZAMBRANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
These men fix their entries to the *parol*-making contest in Dagupan City. The contest is part of this year's city fiesta.

6 Batangas officials suspended

CALAMBA CITY—THE OFFICE OF the Ombudsman has ordered a six-month suspension on six officials of the Batangas capitol for alleged irregularities stemming from the controversial P350-million computerization of the real property tax collection of the province.

The six were all members of the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) that gave the multimillion-peso project to Generation E System Inc. (Gen-E), which subsequently entered into a joint venture project with the Automated Data Processing Technologies (ADPT).

Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon Victor Fernandez also issued a cease-and-desist order to stop the provincial government from releasing P14 million to Gen-E and disbursing other payments until the case is resolved.

Ordered suspended without pay were Mario Lazaro, BAC chair; Rolando Montecillo, BAC vice chair; Victoria Culiat, provincial budget officer; Arsenio Cay Jr., provincial planning and development coordinator; Romelito Ona, acting provincial engineer; and Lorena de Chavez, head of the BAC secretariat.

Fernandez, however, absolved Gov. Armando Sanchez and seven other officials from the case filed by Vice Gov. Ricky Recto.

He also ordered the Department of Interior and Local Government to immediately implement the suspension order dated Nov. 16.

In the five-page ruling, Fernandez explained that while the evidence of guilt against the six BAC members was strong, it cannot be said of Sanchez and all the other accused.

"On the part of respondent Governor Sanchez, there was no clear showing that he was aware of the irregularities…," Fernandez said.

He noted that Sanchez was not aware that The Manila Times issued an affidavit declaring as spurious the "notice to bid" advertisement that supposedly appeared in that newspaper.

Sanchez, he said, was also not aware that the president of another company that purportedly joined the bidding for the computerization project denied having joined the said bidding process.

But Recto lambasted Fernandez's decision, calling it "a jueteng lord justice."

"It was a 'jueteng lord justice' because only the *cobradores* and bet collectors were suspended. But the big fish, the jueteng lord, remains [scot-free]," Recto lamented in a phone interview.

He claimed that the evidence he had submitted to the anti-graft court clearly showed that "Sanchez had a hand in the transaction from beginning to end."

He said documents clearly showed that the governor affixed his signature on the checks issued to ADPT and on the related disbursement forms and vouchers.

"Clearly, Sanchez was the approving, supervising and requesting authority. How can you say that he had no knowledge [of the anomalies]?" Recto argued.

Lawyer Ferdinand Topacio, Sanchez's counsel, laughed off Recto's insinuation that the governor could have influenced the Ombudsman ruling to clear him from graft charges.

Reached by phone, Topacio said Recto's accusation was meant to cover up the weakness of the case that he filed against Sanchez. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Japanese reported missing

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—POLICE were tracking down a Japanese national who mysteriously disappeared here on Sunday.

City police director Senior Supt. Alfredo Toroctocon on Friday told reporters here that it was premature to conclude that Sawada Yasaki had been kidnapped.

Sawada and his fellow Japanese national Yohida Satoshi arrived here on Dec. 7. They checked in at the East Asia Royale Hotel.

According to the police report, Yohida is a frequent visitor of this city. It was Sawada's first visit.

Toroctocon said that in the morning of Dec. 11, the two foreigners went out of the hotel and headed to an undisclosed place.

Later on the same day, Yohida returned to the hotel without Sawada.

He said Yohida checked out a few hours later to catch his flight, leaving Sawada's plane ticket at the reception desk.

Several days after Sawada failed to return to the hotel, Toroctocon said the management reported the incident to the police.

He said in the presence of several witnesses that the police decided to open the luggage left by the missing Japanese national.

Toroctocon said the name "Akini Moreno" was found at the tag outside Sawada's luggage.

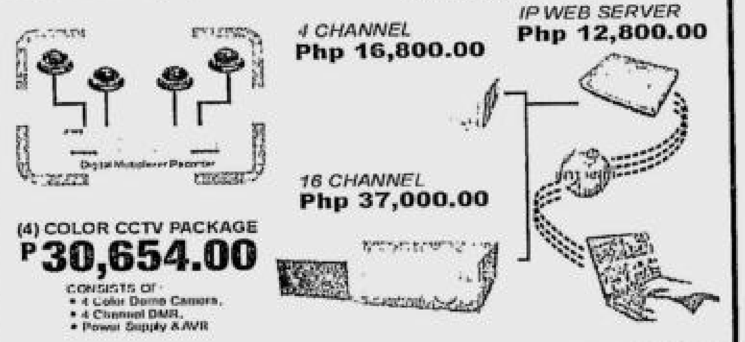
He said they had coordinated with the Japanese Embassy.

He said police investigators have also discovered that Sawada had been seeing a girl, identified only as Weng.

The girl was always with an unidentified male companion.

Mario Bonggay, a taxi driver who was serving Yohida and Sawada during their stay at the hotel, said the duo was engaged in the tuna business.

Bonggay, however, told reporters that he was not aware where the two Japanese nationals went on Sunday. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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Mark Jimenez . . .

From page A1

JIMENEZ

He says he has no memory of him.

But the amnesia is only a temporary condition.

"*Si* Nani Perez? *Nagkaka*-amnesia *ako 'pag Pasko tungkol diyan sa ganyan. Babalik* mind *ko sa* January (Nani Perez? I get amnesia during Christmas when it comes to that. My mind will return in January)," Jimenez said with a smile at an airport press conference on his return from the United States yesterday.

"*Nagdarasal pa ako. Nagdarasal pa siya. Sabay kami nagdarasal* (I'm still praying. He's still praying. We're both praying)," Jimenez said.

Perez is, of course, former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

Before he surrendered to US authorities the day after Christmas in 2002, Jimenez claimed that Perez had extorted $2 million from him in connection with a power project involving an Argentine firm. Perez branded the allegation a lie.

Jimenez also claimed he gave at least P8 million to a foundation belonging to President Macapagal-Arroyo and First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo.

But yesterday, Jimenez dodged questions about politics.

Administration Rep. Prospero Pichay and Manila Rep. Joey Hizon flew to Detroit to accompany him on his flight back home.

The former congressman spent more than two years in a US prison after pleading guilty to election conspiracy and tax evasion charges. US prosecutors said he made about $41,500 in illegal contributions to the US Democratic campaign from 1994 to 1996.

Flight delays marred his journey home.

Northwest Flight NW 071 was originally scheduled to arrive at 10:50 p.m. Saturday, but a technical problem delayed its departure from Detroit.

With a stopover in Japan, the plane's arrival in Manila was reset for 4:06 a.m. yesterday. But strong winds in Japan again delayed the flight, and passengers stayed at the airport overnight.

Wearing a light khaki jacket over a sport shirt, Jimenez was the last passenger to disembark from the plane, which finally landed at 12:20 p.m.

Jimenez will celebrate his 58th birthday on Dec. 31. He was once referred to by jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada as a "corporate genius."

Surrounded by airport policemen, he smiled at journalists as he made his way to the Bureau of Immigration office to sign an interception form, a procedure deportees undergo.

Jimenez started the press conference by thanking President Macapagal-Arroyo, Vice President Noli de Castro and his "friends" in Congress.

He asked for forgiveness from all those he said he had unknowingly hurt and caused pain.

Jimenez lamented what he said was the pervading hatred and divisiveness among Filipinos.

He said the delay of his flight in Japan made him see how Filipinos could unite under the direst situations.

"We had no food. There were children with us. But we helped each other. We can do that too here," Jimenez said in Filipino.

Yes, Virginia, there are little Santa Clauses

From page A1

Heart Street in San Antonio Village in Makati, the only foundation in the country which operates a clinic giving free treatment and therapy to cerebral palsy patients.

The party's theme: "Be a big brother to a special child this Christmas."

Bigger Santas

The girls will turn over some P200,000 worth of food, gifts and toys suited only for the children who can't talk and move. They raised the fund after a two-week "letter brigade" asking the "bigger Santa Clauses" for help.

The kids first approached their fathers. Then they sent letters to friends and patrons. Each student sent out at least 30 letters.

Paula is half-Swede, half-Filipino. Her father is an executive of the United Nations Children Fund. Morina is half-French, half-Nigerian. Her father is a Bayantel executive. Jessie is Singaporean. Her father works at telecom firm Ericsson in Manila.

Tara and Claudine are Filipinos. Tara is a granddaughter of businessman and ambassador Jesus Tambunting. Claudine is the daughter of business and PR couple Willie and Chingbee Fernandez.

The five girls decided to raise funds and organize a Christmas party for the kids after spending about two weeks with them at the clinic.

Better than jazz concert

Claudine brought to the other girls the idea of helping the patients after seeing one of the patients at the clinic a couple of months ago. The patient was her younger cousin.

Her cousin is well taken care of by his family, but what about the less-fortunate kids, she asked.

Claudine and her classmates were then finalizing a school project for a subject on citizenship and they had been thinking of putting up a fashion show or a jazz concert.

The other girls readily agreed.

"All kids are precious, especially on Christmas," Claudine said.

Touching other hearts

"The PCPI is a nonprofit organization dedicated to help those who are afflicted with cerebral palsy ... But the demand for assistance far surpasses what PCPI can provide in terms of funding, therapy and appropriate treatment," the girls said in their letter to Senate President Franklin Drilon.

"In the name of charity, we would like to appeal to you to join us in our attempt to make funding of PCPI operations easier," the letter added.

How the girls, who could hardly speak Tagalog, managed to relate with the patients, who could hardly say a word, was a miracle in this age when skepticism erodes faith.

Initially, all the girls could do was to make faces before the patients.

Awkward beginning

"I felt so uncomfortable in the beginning," Claudine said.

They introduced themselves through a therapist who taught them how to encourage the patients to sit and smile.

The initial reaction they got was warm and encouraging.

"The patients enjoy the attention they are getting from the girls. They feel so important," said Jenny, whose 4-year-old child Christabelle was diagnosed with the disease when she was 6 months old.

"All kids have a language all their own. They develop a natural attraction among themselves," she said.

The girls soon found themselves playing with the patients.

"The patients can't handle things on their own," Claudine said. "They need people to help them out. You realize later that they are like any other human being."

"Honestly, in the beginning I was afraid," Tara said. "I was afraid to touch them because I really didn't know their conditions. I was afraid I might hurt them."

The girls decided to come back the next day. They were surprised to learn that the patients had waited for them the whole morning.

All children are precious

"Instead of watching TV, I want to see them," Paula said. "I thought I should do something worthwhile."

Soon enough, seeing the patients became a habit.

"We have all realized here that all kids, sick with cerebral palsy or not, are precious," Jessie said.

"We often hear people say that it takes a community to raise a child. What more if the child is suffering from cerebral palsy," Morina said.

Added Jessie: "It makes me realize how fortunate we are and that we all have a duty to those who are less fortunate."

Other Santa Clauses

Those who replied to their letters with generous donations were Drilon, Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, UAE Ambassador Mohamed Aljowaid, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, former Sen. Loren Legarda, traders Mon Abad, Ed Lacson, Boy Leonio, Custer and Natalie Panchit, Paul Cortez, Cid Diomampo, Ella Valencerina and Florence Kho.

Others were Del Monte Philippines, Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, Haresco Industries, Read Foundation, Genesis Transport, Manred, Dunkin Donuts, Tambunting Pawnshop and Concept.

Those who want to help may write to Support Friends with Cerebral Palsy/British School Manila/Bonifacio Global City, Taguig; tel. nos. (0915)395-4095, 840-1570, 895-1786.

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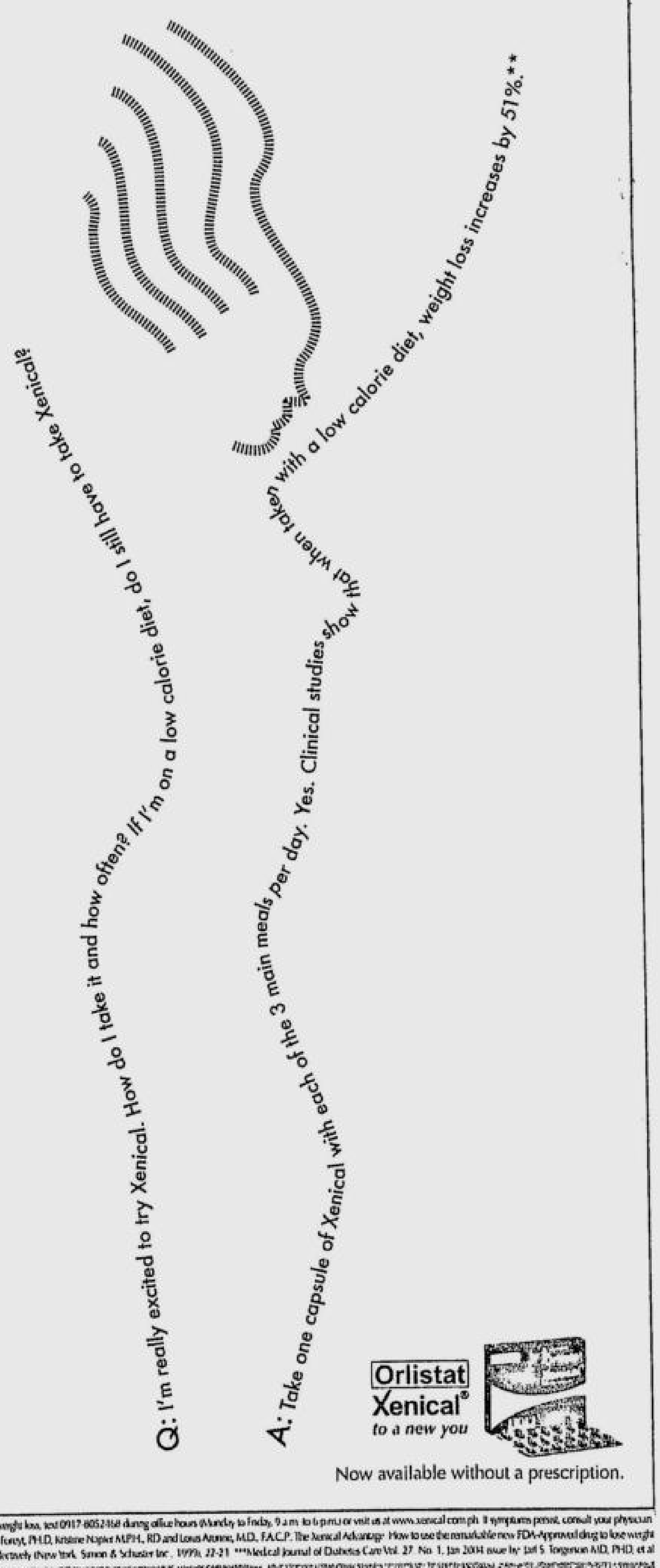

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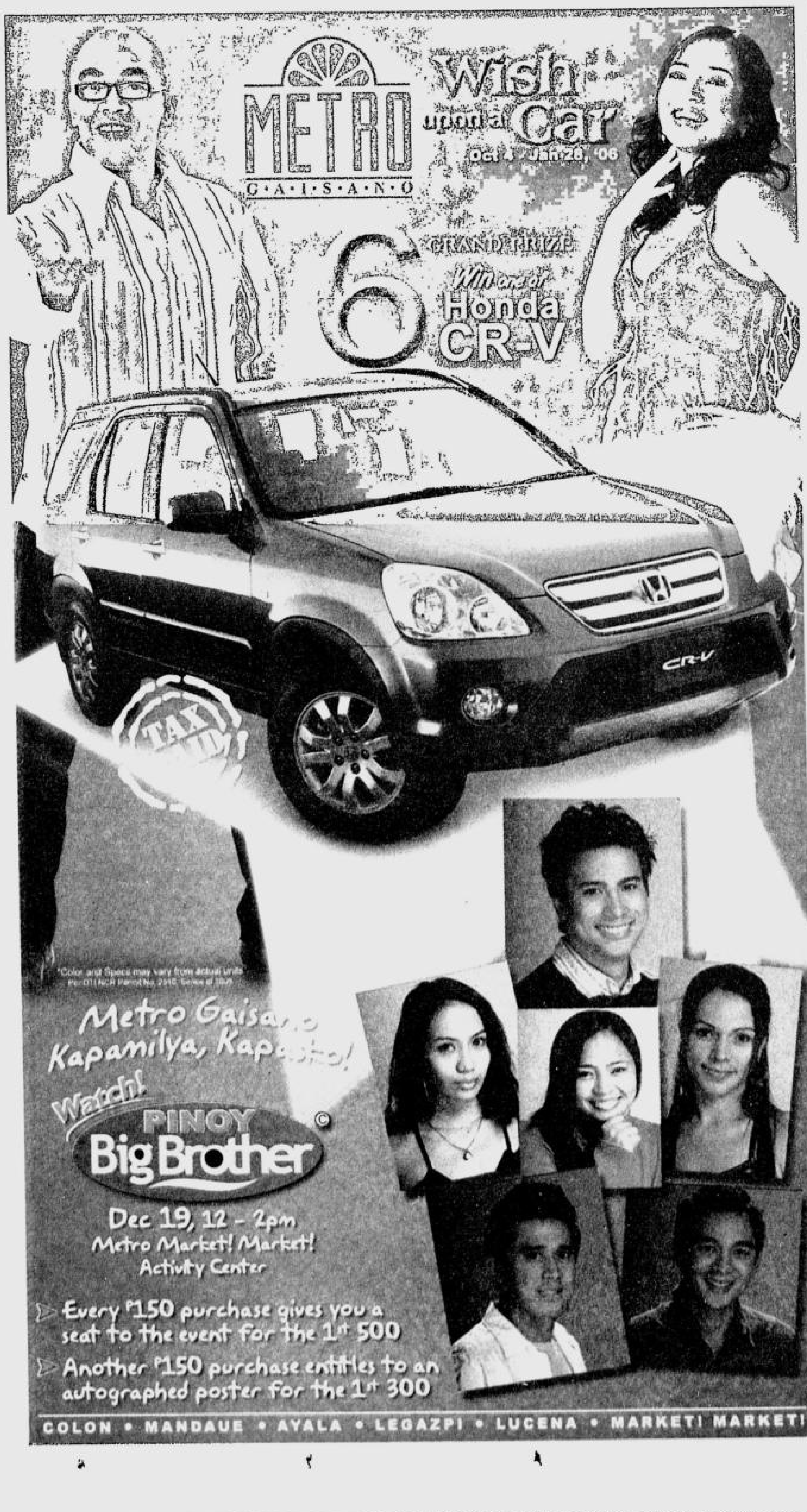

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Peace Dividends

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PEF supports best practices as well as innovative & trailblazing development projects. It provides civil society organizations with development financing and technical assistance; promotes appropriate technology; and promotes networking among its stakeholders.

In four years, as of November 2005, PEF has given financial and technical support to its partners amounting to **P648.86 million** for a total of **531** projects all over the country. Poor communities in **70** provinces are now reaping dividends in peace and development.

For more information and a full list of PEF funded projects from 2001 to 2005, please visit **www.peacefdn.org**

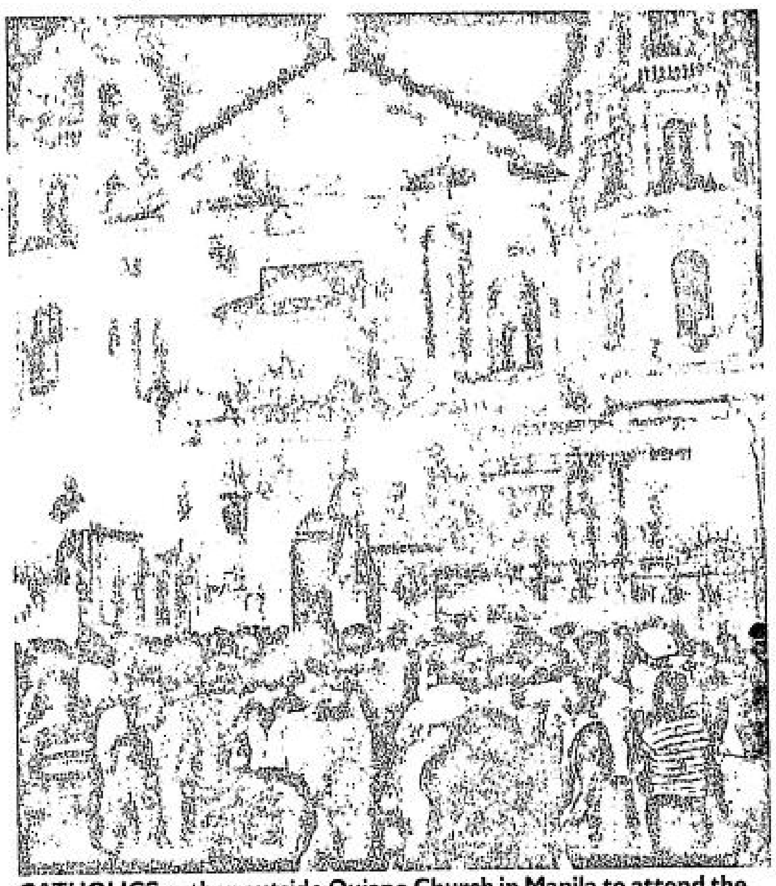
Peace and Equity Foundation

Current Projects as of 2005

PROVINCE	PROPONENT ORGANIZATION	PROJECT TITLE
LUZON	**113 projects**	**P134.3 million**
Basic Services • 21 Projects • P 21.8 million		
Albay	Bicol Initiatives for Community Health Development	Health Plus Social Franchising in Albay
Batangas	Katipunan ng Magsasaka sa Hacienda Roxas Agri-Based MPC	Potable Community Water System in Nasugbu, Batangas
Benguet	Jaime V Ongpin Foundation Inc.	Baguio City Environment Protection and Community Development Project
Cagayan	Wesleyan Brotherhood Association MPC	Bridge and Water Project for Agay Mobile Indigenous Peoples
Kalookan City	Sama-samang Lakas ng Mamamayan sa Tambakan Inc	Patubig Project
Marinduque	Malibago BAWASA MPC	Rehab of Brgy Malibago Potable Waterworks System
Marinduque	Sta. Cruz Credit Cooperative	Improvement of Waterworks System for Brgy Biga
Marinduque	Junior Chamber International Phils - Copper Queen Presidents Association Inc	Improvement of Waterworks System - Maniwaya Island
Marinduque	Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement	Tungib-Lipata Water Supply System
Marinduque	Torrijos Municipal Employees Association	Matuya-Tuya-Suha Water System
Marinduque	Marinducare Foundation, Inc	Construction/ Improvement of Potable Water System
Marinduque	Mogpog Municipal Officials and Employees MPC	Construction of Potable Water Works System
Nueva Ecija	Center for Agrarian Reform, Empowerment and Transformation Inc	Potable Water System for Brgy Magtanggol
Occidental Mindoro	Makabuhay Rotary Village Corps MPC	Phase I Potable Water System for Brgy Central, San Jose Mindoro
Palawan	Tribal Filipino Apostolate Inc./ Indigenous Peoples Apostolate	Community Managed Health and Sanitation Program
Palawan	Palawan Center for Appropriate Rural Technology	Construction of Level 2 Water System in Barangay Taradungan
Quezon City	Philippine Center for Traditional and Asian Medicine Inc	One-Stop Natural Medicine and Wellness Center
Rizal	LUSRAI MPC	Construction and Operation of LMPC Potable Water Distribution System
Romblon	KALAHI MPC (formerly LANAS MPC)	San Jose Water System Rehab and Rainwater Harvesting
Romblon	Sta. Fe MPC	Sta. Fe Water Supply Project
Romblon	St. Joseph MPC	Empowering the BAWASA's to Sustain Existing Systems
Livelihood and Employment • 63 Projects • P 55,4 million		
Albay	Alternative Systems for Community Development (ASCODE) Foundation	Micro-Enterprise Economic Development Program (MDEEP) II
Albay	Social Action Center SEDP-Diocese of Legazpi	Socio-Economic Development Program (SEDP) Legazpi Branch - Phase 2
Aurora	Ugnayan ng Mamayan ng Lungsod at Nayon Assn. Inc	Ang MAKINA ... dagdag na kita at tulong sa pamayanan
Aurora	Association of Rural Community Workers, Inc.	ARCOW Microfinance for Enterprising Men and Women
Batangas	Lobo Community Development Center Inc.	Pawn System Swine Fattening Project Marginal Farmers Income Augmentation Activity
Batangas	Bayan Credit Cooperative	MicroFinance Program Expansion
Batangas	Hiyas Unlad Parent's Association, Inc.	Strengthening HUPAI's Micro Credit and Savings Project
Benguet	Topdac MPC	TOPDAC Micro-Lending Project
Benguet	Tublay Federation of MPCs, Inc	Community Cooperative Marketing System in the Municipality of Tublay
Bulacan	KUMALAPPA, Inc.	Pangkabuhayan Bilang Proyektong Pangsamahan at Kasagian
Bulacan	Anal-Dagat MPC Inc	Bocaue Micro-Lending Project (Phase II)
Camarines Sur	Matatingkas na Agraryong Grupong Sarare Para sa Kauswagan kan Camarines Sur	Expansion of MAGSAKA-CA's Micro-Finance Project and the Rice Marketing in Naga City
Camarines Sur	San Rafael Multi Purpose Parish Cooperative	Integrated Pre and Post Harvest Enterprises System (pilot project for small rice farmers)
Camarines Sur	Pag-asang Bicolnon Foundation, Inc	Electronics Service Center (Repair Shop)
Camarines Sur	Naga City People's Council	Talyer sa Barangay
Ifugao	Lamut Grassroots Savings and Development Cooperative	Empowering Lagdasoco Women to Supplement Farmers Income in Lamut Ifugao
Isabela	Palanan Wilderness Development Cooperative	Palanan Rural Women Sabutan Handicraft Production and Marketing
Kalinga	Kalinga Mission for Children and Youth Development, Inc	Kalinga Indigenous Peoples Culture Sensitive and Integrated Area-Based Sustainable Development Program
Kalinga	Ngibat Farmers Association Inc	Rehabilitation of Ngibat Multi-Purpose Irrigation System
Kalookan City	Birhen ng Lourdes Parish Credit Cooperative	Tulungan sa Kabuhayan Project Phase 2
Kalookan City	Magkakaisang Damdamin ng Magkakapitbahay Inc	Kabuhayan, Lupa at Kaunlaran sa ating Komunidad
Kalookan City	Akbong Nagsusulong ng Alternatibong Kultura Inc	Waste Paper Recovery
Kalookan City	Zero Waste Recycling Movement of the Philippines Foundation Inc	Dagaro Integrated Solid Waste Management Project (DISWMP)
Laguna	Organic Producers and Trade Association	Carotenoid, Tocopherol ans Sterol Evaluation of Pili-Pulp Oil for the Production of Specialty Oil Concentrates
Laguna	Samahang Gintong Silahis	Fish Pen Project
Manila City	Old Sta. Mesa Credit Cooperative	Creation of Stable Employment through the Organization, Formation, Development, and Management of Micro- and Small Enterprises
Manila City	Old Sta. Mesa Savings and Credit Cooperative	Savings Mobilization through Enhanced Products and Services
Marinduque	Bangwayin Farmer Beneficiaries Multi Purpose Cooperative	Bangwayin Farmer Beneficiaries Carabao Dispersal and Working Animals
Marinduque	Gasan Vendors MPC	Relending for Working Capital
NCR	Kooperatiba ng Sambayan ng Banal na Krus	Cooperative Assistance to Reinforce Entrepreneurs (CARE)
NCR	Barangka Credit Cooperative	Puhunan sa May Kakayahang Magnegosyo
Nueva Ecija	Nagkakaisa MPC	Nagkakaisa Integrated Development Project
Nueva Vizcaya	Gising Bayan Foundation	Marketing of Vegetable and Native Food Products in lieu of the project ended. Gising Bayan Project Development and Food for the Poor Program
Occidental Mindoro	Silo Tugulian MPC	Carabao for Life
Occidental Mindoro	Upper and Lower Magbay MPC	Palay Trading Project
Occidental Mindoro	Bagong Liwanag MPC ng Balasan	Palay Trading Project
Occidental Mindoro	Mindoro Farmers Resource Center	Organic Fertilizer Processing Plant
Occidental Mindoro	Bulacan, Sigaisig ng Layon at Kapatiran MPC	BUSILAK Micro Re-lending
Occidental Mindoro	Bubog Development Cooperative, Inc	BUDECO Lending Services
Occidental Mindoro	Centro Bayotbot Farmers MPC	Centro Bayotbot Micro-Lending Services
Occidental Mindoro	Tangkalan Agricultural Multi-Purpose Development Cooperative	Support Services for Tangkalan Agri Multi-Purpose Devt Coop
Oriental Mindoro	Concerned Countryside People MPC	Spawn and Mushroom Production/ Mushroom Culture
Oriental Mindoro	Samahang Mangyan ng Tinis-an	Tree Seedlings and Irrigation Equipment
Oriental Mindoro	Kaunsayan Formation for Community Development Inc	Women Response in Poverty Alleviation 2 - WRIPA 2
Palawan	Tribal Christian Agricultural MPC	Working Capital for the Production of Rattan Handicrafts and Nature Conservation Program
Quezon	BP Operation Compassion International, Inc.	Agricultural Livelihood Assistance Program
Quezon	Infanta Integrated Development Assistance	Riceland Rehabilitation for Infanta, Quezon
Quezon	The Joint Enterprise Development for the Indigent Foundation, Inc	Micro Finance Project for Low Income Earners in Quezon Province (Year II)
Quezon	Tulong-Kalinga, Inc.	Katuwang Patungo sa Wasto't Abot Kamay na Kaunlaran (KAPWA)
Quezon	Pambayanang Federasyon ng Maliliit na Magniniyog ng Infanta	Infanta Husk Processing Projects
Quezon City	EuroCredit Cooperative	Enhancing Capital Access and Capacitating the Entrepreneurial Poor Through Financial and Entrepreneurship Education
Regionwide	Kapisanan ng Magsasaka, Mangingisda at Manggagawa sa Pilipinas, Inc	National Seedbanking and Exchange Program for Small Farmers (SEEDBANK)
Rizal	People's Investment MPC, Inc	People's Investment Micro Credit Program
Rizal	Cainta Homeowners Water Service and MPC	Satisfying the Basic Needs of an Urban Poor Community
Romblon	Barangay Basiano Small Coconut Farmers Organization	Romblon Coconut Husk Processing Project
Romblon	Barangay Rizal Small Coconut Farmers Organization	Romblon Coconut Husk Processing Project
Romblon	Romblon Telecom Employees Credit Coop	Social Credit Project
Romblon	AGPANABAT MPC	Transport Service
Romblon	Romblon Barangay Nutrition Scholars MPC	Livelihood Loan Fund of BNS MPC
Romblon	St. Vincent Ferrer Parish MPC Inc.	Coco Methyl Ester (CME) Production
Sorsogon	Storom MPC	Storom MPC Stationary Bag Net Project
Sorsogon	Sandigan ng Magsasaka	Agricultural Productivity Enhancement Program for Poverty Alleviation
Sorsogon	Malayang Lupian ng Kababaihan, Inc	Tulong Salong sa Kabuhayan (A Microfinance Project for the Poor Women of Irosin)
Partnership and Access Centers • 6 Projects • P51.5 million		
Albay	Albay Provincial NGO PO Network for Development	Albay Partnership and Access Center (APAC)
CAR	Cordillera Network of Development NGOs and Pos	CORDNET Integrated Resource Center as a Regional Access Center Model
Marinduque	Marinduque Diocesan Development Cooperative	Establishment of PAC in Marinduque
Oriental Mindoro	Oriental Mindoro NGO/PO Network	Formation of the PAC
Palawan	Palawan NGO Network Inc	Palawan Community Resource and Access Center
Sorsogon	Provincial Alliance of NGOs and POs for Development Inc	The Sorsogon Partnership and Access Center (Phase I)
Social Capital • 10 Projects • P1.4 million		
Benguet	Diocesan Social Action Commission of the Diocese of Baguio	Building up a Multi-Sectoral Strategic Response Capacity for Advocacy Regarding Major Issues of the Communities of Baguio City and the Province of Benguet
Catanduanes	Hiwas Catandungan Inc	Building Partnership for Governance and Abaca Industry Integrated Development Initiatives
Hongkong	Diocese of Bayombong - DSAC	Lakbay Aral to Kadoorie Farms and Botanical Garden
Marinduque	Marinduque National Government Officers and Employees MPC	Project Development for the Promotion of the Butterfly Industry
Marinduque	Marinduque Butterfly Council	Promotion and Development of the Butterfly Industry in Marinduque
Quezon	Aksyon para sa Kapayapaan at Katarungan (Action for Peace and Justice) - Center for Active Non-Violence, FORPhil, Inc	Third Active Non-Violence Seminar for Infanta and Reflection/Evaluation of Formation Activities
Quirino	Pusuac MPC	Organic Fertilizer Production Training
Region 4	Ugnayan ng mga Magsasaka sa Quezon	Consultation on Organic Rice Certification and Marketing
Sorsogon and Camarines Sur	SSEAYP Banyuhay 2001 Inc.	Mentoring Assistance Project
Tarlac	Holy Spirit Center of Tarlac, Inc.	Taking Roots in One's Ancestral Lands" A Process of Consulting, Enabling and Empowering IP Communities to Manage The Natural Resources within their Ancestral Domain
Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation • 6 Projects • P3.4 million		
Oriental Mindoro	Mangyan Mission	Relief and Rehabilitation of Mangyan Communities Devastated by Typhoon Unding
Oriental Mindoro	Buklurang Lakas Mangingisda	Relief Assistance to 11 Victims of Typhoon Unding
Quezon	Infanta Integrated Development Assistance	Relief and Rehab Activities for ICDAI - Sagip Buhay Program
Region 4	Center for Disaster Preparedness Foundation Inc	Capacity Building of LGU for Disaster Risk Management
Region 5	Coalition of Bicol Development	Rebuilding Homes Rebuilding Lives: A Rehabilitation Project for the Provinces of Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, Catanduanes and City of Iriga
Sorsogon	Ungop Para sa Kalusugan ng Sambayanan, Inc.	Shelter Assistance Project for Bulan Fire Victims
Others • 7 Projects • P0.9 million		
Ilocos Norte	Cooperative Education Foundation Ilocos Norte	Micro Lending for Livelihood cum Technical and Capacity Building Assistance
Kalinga	Mediators Network for Sustainable Peace Inc	A Book on the Successful Resolution of the 54-yr old Land Conflict in Rizal, Kalinga
Kalinga	Small Household Action for Rural Economic Development Toward Healthy Environmental Management	Study for Mangali Tanudan Micro-Hydro Project (MHP) Development
Kalookan City	Sibol ng Agham at Teknolohiya Inc	Participatory Research Towards Enterprise Devt of Urban Sustainable Agriculture Program in Bagong Silang
Marinduque	Marinduque Diocesan Development Cooperative Office, Sacred Heart Pastoral Center	Micro-Financing with Automated Accounting System
Occidental Mindoro	Anak-Pawis Shoreline Labor Service and MPC	Financial Management Training and System Installation
Quezon City	E-Search Information and Resource Center Inc.	Erosion and Pollution Control using the Vetiver Grass Technology (VGT) with a Livelihood Component
VISAYAS	**97 projects**	**P137.7 million**
Basic Services • 23 Projects • P42.1 million		
Aklan	Agbalogo Farmers MPC	Water To Drink and Support Among Upland Farmers
Bohol	Mangool Active Mothers' Association	Paghimo ug Reservoir ug Pagtalod ug mga Tubo
Bohol	Rizal MPC	Expansion of Rizal Potable Water System Development Project
Bohol	Kapunungang Kablingbanon Kalambuan sa Ilaud Association	Expansion of Ilaud Potable Water System Development Project
Bohol	Minol Women's Association	Water Access and Tree Planting for Environmental Rehabilitation (WATER Project)
Bohol	Corte-Baud Rehabilitation for Progress (CBRPP)	Upgrading and Expansion of Corte-Baud Water System
Bohol	Participatory Research, Organization of Communities and Education towards Struggle for Self-Reliance Inc	Upgrading of Level I Water System
Bohol	Nagkahiusang Mag-uuma sa Nueva Granada	Nueva Granada Potable Water System Development Project: A Part of Buenavista Uplifting Groups for Water Access (BUGWAC)
Bohol	Nagkahiusang Inahan sa Hinlayagan Ilaya	Level II Piped Water System Development in Puroks 1 and 2, Hinlayagan Ilaya, Trinidad, Bohol
Bohol	Alumar Women's Organization	Upgrading and Expansion of Alumar Water Level I System
Bohol	Kapunongan Alang sa Malambuong Katawhan	Installation of Capayas Level II Water System
Bohol	Campao Occidental Fishermens' Association	Upgrading and expansion of campao occidental Level II water system
Bohol	Kagawasan MPC	Installation of Kagawasan Level II Water System
Bohol	Panaghiusang Mag-uuma sa Cabangahan	Installation of Cabangahan Level II Water System
Bohol	Villa Anunciado Samahang Nayon, Inc	Villa Anunciado Potable Level II Water System
Cebu	Pagtambayayong Foundation, Inc.	Socialized Housing Projects
Cebu	Daanglungsod, Guiwang, San Agustin Rural Waterworks and Sanitation Association, Inc.	Expansion of Water Services
Cebu	Daklan-ong Pundok, Inc.	Dakit Potable Water System Rehabilitation
Cebu	Ramon Aboitiz Foundation Inc.	Expansion of the MORWASA Water System In Barangay Molobolo, Tuburan, Cebu
Eastern Samar	Catholic Social Service Center	Brgy Cah-ilay Potable Water System Project
Negros Occidental	JF Ledesma Foundation Inc	Social Housing for Low-Income and Various Poverty Groups
Negros Occidental	Aliora Ossero Foundation Inc.	Let There Be Light (and Water!): Playpump Station for Rural Barangays
Northern Samar	Sacred Heart Institute for Transformative Education Foundation, Inc	Bridge Financing for Education
Livelihood and Employment • 44 Projects • P59.4 million		
Antique	Antique Development Foundation, Inc	Antique Handicraft Industry Development Project
Biliran	Bunga Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries MPC	Bunga Copra Trading
Biliran	Fatima MPC	Oswag sa Kabuhayan Loan (OK Loan)
Bohol	Ubay Dairy MPC	Small Water Impounding Project
Bohol	Taytay Sa Kauswagan, Inc.	Proyekto Kauswagan sa Katilingban
Bohol	FCB Foundation Inc	Support for Promoting Environment-friendly Enterprise Development in the Integration of Population and Coastal Resource Management (SPEED-IPOPCORM)
Bohol	San Miguel MPC	San Miguel Multi Purpose Coop Marketing Project
Bohol	Carmen MPC	CMPC Palay Marketing Project
Bohol	Kapunungan sa Nagpakabanang Inahan	Buri Fiber and Broom Making Production
Bohol	Kapunungan sa mga Inahan alang sa Kaugmaran	Purchase of equipment/utensils for the Production of Pastries and Baked Products
Bohol	Social Action Center, Diocese of Talibon	Skills Development and Credit Assistance Program for Family Victims of Mass Pesticide Poisoning
Capiz	Datu Bangkaya Traders' MPC	Datu Bangkaya Traders MPC Micro-Lending Project
Capiz	Capiz-Roxas Islamic Foundation, Inc.	Maranao Women Financing Center
Cebu	Alcoy MPC	Poverty Alleviation Program for Alcoyanon
Cebu	Oslob MPC	Project for the Development of Micro-enterprise in Oslob (ProDEMO)
Cebu	Cebu Peoples Development Cooperative	Sustainable Household Assistance for Reliable Entrepreneurship (SHARE)
Cebu	Oslob MPC	Micro-enterprise Assistance Fund (MEAF)
Cebu	Sibonga MPC	Small and Immediate Cooperative Assistance Program (SICAP)
Cebu	SUBASPA MPC	SUBASPA Marketing and Trading Center
Eastern Samar	Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation, Inc.	Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation, Inc.- Project Dungganon Branch Expansion in Samar Area
Iloilo	MaCaSaBat-SIAD Federation Inc.	MaCaSaBat Resource Integration for Community Enterprise (RICE) Project
Iloilo	Tambal Small Farmers and Farm Workers Association	Shallow Tube Wells
Iloilo	Association of Disabled Persons-Iloilo, Inc	Capitalization and Equity Investment (Micro-Finance for Poverty Alleviation)
Iloilo	Carles MPC	Carles Poverty, Inequality Reduction Program Thru Microfinance
Leyte	Ciabu Primary MPC	Savings and Credit for Micro-Entrepreneurs Progress
Leyte	Cooperative Bank of Leyte	Sustainable Micro-Enterprise & Livelihood Enhancement Fund (SMILE)
Leyte	Omaganhan Farmers MPC	Scaling Up Micro Finance Management for Entrepreneurial Development (SCAMED)
Negros Occidental	Task Force Mapalad, Inc.	Poverty Reduction Through Production Credit Assistance and Capability Development for Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries in Negros Occidental
Negros Occidental	La Salle Brothers, Employees, Teachers Credit Cooperative, Inc	Micro-lending Assistance to small Entrepreneurs
Negros Occidental	Kababaehan para sa Kinabukasan	Livelihood Assistance and Skills Training for KASAKI
Negros Occidental	San Vicente I ARB MPC	Enterprise Support Project for the Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries (ARBs) in Kapitan Ramon
Negros Oriental	Valencia Fiber Producers Marketing Cooperative, Inc.	Livelihood Augmentation through Micro-Finance Program (LAMP)
Negros Oriental	Sta. Catalina Multi-Purpose Agricultural Cooperative (SCAMPACI)	Sta. Catalina Microfinance Project
Negros Oriental and Negros Occ	First Consolidated Cooperative Along Tañon Seaboards	FCCT Microfinance Expansion Project
Northern Samar	Bayog Valley Farmers MPC	Copra Trading
Northern Samar	Libjo Community MPC	Copra Trading
Northern Samar	Samar Center for Rural Education and Development (SACRED)	Economic Upliftment for Urban Poor Development Project
Northern Samar	Banlayan Fabric MPC	Bulig-an Kooperatiba ug Ako sa Ikauswag (BAKASI)
Northern Samar	Cabacungan Primary Multi-Purpose Coop	Cabacungan Savings and Credit Project (CSCP)
Northern Samar	Oleras Multi-Purpose Economic and Development Coop	Oleras Assistance Program to Small Farmers
Region 6 7 & 8	Philippine Business for Social Progress	People's Organizations Regional Trade Fair Project (PORT Fair Project)
Region 8	Bahandi Producers Association of Eastern Visayas	Financing & Marketing Program for Micro-Entrepreneurs
Samar	Pitad, Inc	Working Capital for Production of Coir-based Handicrafts
Samar	GICS - Samar	Mussel Culture
Partnership and Access Center • 6 Projects • P31.3 million		
Bohol	Feed the Children Philippines Inc, in partnership with Bohol NGO/PO network	Bohol Fund for Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Development
Cebu	Alliance for Land and Livelihood for the Rural and Urban Poor of Cebu	Local Access Center for the Island of Cebu
Cebu	Alliance for Land and Livelihood for the Rural and Urban Poor of Cebu	Rental Housing for Livelihood Project
Eastern Samar	Eastern Samar Coalition of NGOs and POs	Partnership & Access Center Establishment in the Province of Eastern Samar
Negros Occidental	Federation of Multi-Sectoral Alliance for Development Negros	Provincial Development Fund for the Improvement of Small Families in Negros Occidental
Negros Oriental	Negros Oriental Network of NGOs	Negros Oriental Partnership and Access Center
Social Capital • 5 Projects • P2.1 million		
Cebu	Mag-uugmad Foundation Inc	Visayas Regional Conference on Natural Resources Management and Participatory Local Governance (NRM and PLG)
Leyte	Action for Community Empowerment Association	Technology Exposure on Abaca Production and Processing
Negros Oriental & Iloilo	Reform and Peace Movement in the Philippines Foundation	Strengthening Program Management Capabilities of RPMP
Samar	Gugma Han Maqueda Bay Uguin-Undong Han Organisasyon Samarnon, Inc	Democratic People's Participation in Governance
Southern Leyte	Organization for Training, Research and Development Foundation, Inc	Capacity Building for OTRADEV
Disaster Relief/Rehabilitation • 1 Project • P0.2 million		
Samar	Basey Women's Resource Network Association	Relief and Rehabilitation of Evacuees
Others • 18 Projects • P2.6 million		
Bohol	PROCESS Bohol Inc. (cluster lead agency)	Poverty Reduction Program Development for Cluster 2
Bohol	University of Bohol Community Development Foundation, Inc	Proposal Development Project
Bohol	Feed the Children, Philippines Inc	Proposal Development for the Poverty Reduction Area Development Plan of Bohol, Cluster 1
Bohol	Community Awareness and Services for Ecological Concern Inc	Proposal Development
Capiz	Capiz Vendors MPC	Institutional Support for the Microfinance Lending Project
Cebu	Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas-Visayas	Visayas-Wide Instructive Forum on Mining
Cebu	San Remegio Unified Cooperative	Institutional Development Support for a Microfinance Project
Eastern Samar	Federation of Senior Citizens Association	People's Drugstore
Eastern Samar	Can-Avid Women's Association	Commodity Store and Rice Trading
Leyte	Tambulid Relocation Site Cooperative	Development Support for TARESCO
Leyte	Leyte Rural Advancement Programmes, Inc	Insti Dev for the Coconut Wine and Liquor Production
Negros Occidental	Purok Himaya Community Association, Inc.	Purok Himaya Micro-Lending for Livelihood Development
Negros Occidental	Alternative Indigenous Development Foundation Inc.	Feasibility Study of Hydraulic Ram Pump Water System Project
Negros Oriental	Justice Economy Environment & Resources Multi-Purpose Transport Service Cooperative	Micro-Financing Project (Institutional Development Support for Coop Governance)
Negros Oriental	Bayawan Multi-Purpose Agricultural Kilusang Bayan	Micro Lending Expansion and Loan Recovery [illegible]
Northern Samar	Northern Samar Federation of Multi-Purpose/Agri-Based Coops	NSPCCI Insti Development Project
Region 8	Institute for Democratic Participation in Governance	Supporting Poverty Mapping and Model Development in the Implementation of the Community-Based Monitoring System in Eastern Visayas
Samar	Samar Rural Communities Assistance Program Inc.	Para-teachers Training for Community-based [illegible]
MINDANAO	**41 projects**	**P154.9 million**
Basic Services • 18 Projects • P19.6 million		
Compostela Valley	Kalusugan Alang sa Bayan Inc	Bantuayan Spring Development
Davao	Kalusugan Alang sa Bayan, Inc. (KAABAY, Inc.)	Magumon Water Spring Development
Davao del SUR	Interface Development Interventions, Inc.	Community Water System Extension Project for Marginalized Upland Farmers in Baguio District
Lanao del Sur	Community Organizers Multiversity	Baroring Potable Water System
Lanao del Sur	Kalimudan Foundation Inc	Gadungan Level 2 Potable Water Supply System Project
Maguindanao	Kadtabanga Foundation for Peace and Development Advocates, Inc.	Malgues-Taviran Potable Water Spring Development
Misamis Oriental	OND HESED Foundation	Gamot ng Bayan Botika
Sarangani	Datal Tampal Farmers Cooperative	Day Care Center
South Cotabato	Tribal Leaders Development Foundation Inc	Upper Macutan Water System Project (Water System Level II)
South Cotabato	Women Indigenous Focus for Enhancement, Inc. (WIFE)	Construction of Lamlabong-bong Potable Water System Level II
Sulu	Apostolic Vicariate of Jolo	Kasamayahan Village Artesian Well
Sulu	Kahikukuk Brgy. Renewable Energy and Community Development Association	Kahikukok Solar-Powered Community-Managed level 2 potable water project
Surigao del Norte	Movers Club of Malimono, Inc	Bangka sa Bario Project
Surigao del Sur	Rural Enterprise Assistance Center Foundation, Inc	Expansion of Cortugas Water System
Surigao del Sur	Aras-asan-Unidad Rural Water and Sanitation Association	Rehabilitation and Construction of Potable Water System Level III
Tawi-Tawi	Phil. Center for Water and Sanitation-International Training Network Foundation (PCWS-ITNF)	Rainwater Harvesting for Drinking Water Supply
Livelihood and Employment • 57 Projects • P119.6 million		
Agusan del Norte	Coop Bank of Agusan del Norte	SINAG-Sariling Impok Natin Ating Gamitin
Basilan	Claret Samal Foundation, Inc	Samal Bajau Footbridge
Basilan	Kasanyangan Foundation Inc.	Assistance to Rural Social Enterprises in Mindanao
Bukidnon	Impahanong-Amosig Higaonon Tribal Community, Inc.	Higaonon Small Irrigation
Bukidnon	Bukidnon Cooperative Bank	Sikap Sariling Impok, Kita at Pag-asenso
Bukidnon	Relocation Community Homeowners Association	Additional Working Capital for Micro-Financing Program
Bukidnon	Bayanihan sa Halapitan MPC	BAHA MPC Micro-Financial Project
Compostela Valley	Nabunturan Agrarian Reform Community Integrated Cooperative	Rice Trading Services
Compostela Valley	Asuncion Association of Differently Abled Person	AASDAP Micro Lending
Compostela Valley	Pindasan MPC	Consumer Store
Compostela Valley	GROW Lambo MPC	Integrated Community Organizing for Micro-Enterprise (INCOME) Project
Cotabato	Family Brotherhood Fishing and Farming Association, Inc	Sustainable Mudcrabs Fattening in Ponds
Cotabato	SeaCrop Feeds and Fertilizers Technology Center MPC	NutriHelp 100R: Rice Fortification Project
Cotabato	Sta. Catalina MPC	Cooperative Small Enterprise Credit Assistance Program (COOP SECAP)
Cotabato	KAMANEPLA MPC	Micro Enterprise Development Expansion to Tulunan Women
Cotabato	Network of Initiatives in the Countryside for Empowerment in Mindanao, Inc	Micro-finance and Micro-enterprise Growth for Community Development
Cotabato	Cooperative Bank of Cotabato	CBC Microfinance Project in Arakan
Cotabato	Women Multi-Purpose Development Cooperative	Household Enterprise Lending Program
Cotabato	Mlang MPC	Micro Enterprise Development Expansion
Cotabato	Pangao-an HomeOwners MPC Inc	PHOMPC Integrated Micro Finance Project II
Cotabato	Household Savings and Credit Cooperative	Expansion of Micro-Lending Services
Cotabato	Ipuan Farmers MPC	Palay Trading and Post Harvest Facilities
Davao	Kipalili Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries MPC	Palay Trading
Davao del SUR	Bansalan Cooperative Society	Expansion of Savings and Credit with Education: A Micro Finance Program
Davao del SUR	People's Economic Advancement for Community Empowerment Foundation	Area Resource Center-Savings and Loan for Integral Devt and Empowerment of the Community(ARC-SLIDECOM)
Davao del SUR	Community Organizing: Davao Experience (CODE) Foundation	Micro Credit to Informal Entrepreneurs: An Expansion
Davao del SUR	Baba's Foundation	Expansion of DREAM Project
Davao del SUR	Peoples Economic Advancement for Community Empowerment Foundation, Inc	Expanded Savings and Credit for Community Development Project
Davao del SUR	Sugar Industry Foundation Inc.	Supporting Local Entrepreneurship through Overseas Remittances
Davao del SUR	San Isidro MPC	SIMPC Trucking Services
Davao del SUR	Technical Assistance Center for the Development of the Rural and Urban Poor	Market Study for Organically Grown Rice
Davao Oriental	PICOP Christ Centered Cooperative Institute - Cooperative Development Center	Expansion of Micro-Credit Services for Small Entrepreneurs
Lanao del Norte	Manga Fishermen MPC	Expansion of MAFIMCO's Micro-Lending Project
Lanao del Norte	Maranding Women Investors MPC	Lanao Del Norte Savings And Credit Center
Lanao del Sur	Extension Farmers MPC	Micro-Finance Expansion Project
Lanao del Sur	Unity and Cooperation Foundation of Lanao del Sur Inc	Micro-Credit for Displaced and War Affected Women
Maguindanao	Liguasan Youth Association for Sustainable Development	Liguasan Hatchery and Fish Caging Project
Maguindanao	New Bucana Purok 4 Fishermen Multi-Purpose Cooperative	Tuna Hook and Line Fishing Project
Misamis Occidental	GATA DAKU MPC	Expansion of Micro-Livelihood Support Program (MLSP)
Misamis Oriental	Cooperative Bank of Misamis Oriental	Asonse and Palad Project
Regionwide	MASS-SPEC Cooperative Development Center	Upscaling Cooperative Microfinance Initiatives in Mindanao
Regionwide	(Mindanao Alliance for Self-Help Society - southern Philippines Educational Coop Center) MASS-SPECC Cooperative Development Center	Synergizing for Poverty Reduction Action in Mindanao (SPREAD) MASS-SPECC Mindanao Coops Access Center
Sarangani	United Maligang Farmers MPC	An Expansion on the Trading of Tinagak and Abaca Fiber
Sarangani	Katotohanan, Pagkakaisa at Serbisyo, Inc.	Continuation Project/Upscaling Micro-Financing Assistance to the Poorest in GenSan and SOCCSKSARGEN
Sarangani	Saranay MPC	Expansion Project on Trading Business and Loan Program
South Cotabato	Maligo MPC	Mango Food Processing Project
Sultan Kudarat	Isulan Grains MPC	Expansion of Working Capital for Micro-Lending Services
Sultan Kudarat	Reconciliation Center Inc	Reconciliation Center Livelihood Project
Sultan Kudarat	Reconciliation Center - CCF	Reconciliation Center Livelihood Project
Sultan Kudarat	Guiamaba Farmers MPC	Rice and Corn Trading
Sultan Kudarat	Esperanza Market Vendors MPC	Rice and Corn Trading
Surigao del Norte	Surigao Economic Development Foundation	Micro Enterprise Development in Mainit, Surigao del Norte
Zamboanga del Norte	Pantukan MPC	PLMPC Micro-Lending
Zamboanga del Norte	Dipolog Sikap Women's MPC	Smoked Boneless Herring
Zamboanga Sibugay	Maligaya Rubber and Farmers MPC	Bigasan Project
Zamboanga Sibugay	Small Dried Fish Association	Fish Processing and Marketing Project
Zamboanga Sibugay	Riverside Women MPC	Fish Processing and Marketing
Partnership and Access Center • 4 Projects • P44.3 million		
Cotabato City	Kutawato Coalition of Development NGOs	Kutawato Partnership and Access Center
South Cotabato	Coalition of Social Development Organizations in South Cotabato	Provincial Development Institution Assistance in South Cotabato
South Cotabato	Coalition of Social Development Organizations in South Cotabato in partnership with with 16 PO/NGO Association	Partnership Program in Potable Water System Delivery in South Cotabato "A Provincial Access Center and Local Government Unit Partnership" Phase II
Zamboanga del Sur	Zamboanga Coalition of Development NGOs	Zamboanga City Partnership and Access Center
Social Capital • 1 Project • P1.2 million		
ARMM	Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society	CSOs Participation in the ARMM Electoral Process and Governance
Others • 3 Projects • P0.3 million		
Bukidnon	Quezon Manobo Tribes Association, Inc	QUEMTRAS Capacity Building Trainings
Cotabato	People, Plants, Research and Development Inc.	Participatory Research on System of Rice Intensification
Davao del SUR	YAMOG Renewable Energy Development Group, Inc	Preparation of Feasibility Study for two proposed [illegible]
NATIONAL	**35 projects**	**P77.3 million**
Livelihood and Employment • 10 Projects • P36.0 million		
Nationwide	National Federation of Cooperatives of Persons with Disability	NFCPWD - DepEd School Desk Project
Nationwide	Upland Marketing Foundation Inc	Support for Community-Based Enterprises (CBE)
Nationwide	Diliman Foundation Inc.	Gawang Pinoy para sa Pinoy
Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental, Iloilo and capiz	Philippine Agrarian Reform Foundation for National Development	Emergency Support Fund for Sugarland Haciendas
Region4	Metro South Cooperative Bank	Partnership for Cooperative Development in MIMAROPA Area
Social Capital • 10 Projects • P5.1 million		
La Union	Community Management Institute	Consolidation of Development NGOs and POs in the Province of La Union Towards Network Building
Metro Manila	Organic Certification Center of the Philippines	Understanding International Organic Standards, Certification and Inspection. A training Proposal for International Organic Inspection Accreditation
Metro Manila	Maximo T. Kalaw Institute for Sustainable Development	Managing BioRegions for Sustainable Development (A Workshop on Community Centered Ecosystems-Based Management Technology for Sustainable Development)
Metro Manila	Urban Poor Alliance (UP-ALL)	Urban Poor Solidarity Week Celebration
Misamis Oriental	Abai Weavers MPC	Basic Jewelry Design Training for Silk and other Materials for Livelihood
Nationwide	People's Campaign for Agrarian Reform Network (AR Now!)	Strengthening Civil Society Organizations (Farmer Sector) Capacity for Policy Advocacy Engagement with Government Through the NAPC and Congress
Nationwide	Institute for People Power and Development	The Poverty Scorecard
Nationwide	Katutubong Samahan sa Pilipinas	Indigenous Peoples Organization Ethnographic Consultation
Nationwide	Ayala Foundation, Inc.	Fundraising Capacity Building for Philippine Non-Government Organizations
Quezon City	Civil Society Counterpart Council for Sustainable Development	Enabling NGOs and POs to Participate in the International Conference "Safe Food, Safe Planet"
Special Projects • 5 Projects • P23.7 million		
Makati City	Association of Foundations/ CODE-NGO	Social Development Week 2004
Makati City	Association of Foundations (AF)	Social Development Week 2005
Metro Manila	Women's Media Circle Foundation Inc	Short Takes: Sa Atin Pa Rin ang Bukas
National	National Congress of CMP Originators and Social Development Organizations for Low Income Housing	Towards the Creation of a Guarantee Fund for Leveraging Housing Loans for the Urban Poor
Nationwide	National Coop IT Company / National Confederation of Cooperatives	Software Customization Project for a Coop NGO Network
Others • 14 Projects • P12.8 million		
Metro Manila	Environmental Broadcast Circle	Campaign Planning Workshop for Advocacy and the Launching of the ATM (Alyansa Tigil Mina)
Metro Manila	Dairy Development Foundation of the Philippines Inc	White Revolution, Philippines: An Advocacy Campaign for Dairy Development
Metro Manila	MIRIAM P.E.A.C.E. (Public Education and Awareness Campaign for the Environment)	Technology Options for Two-Stroke Powered Tricycles
Nationwide	Synergeia Foundation	Pathways Small Grants Competition for Innovative Projects
Nationwide	Urban Poor Associates	Buhay Maralita: Mga Tula, Kanta at Maikling Kwento ng Kahirapan at Pag-asa
Nationwide	Galing Pilipino Movement Foundation Inc.	GP Television Series
Nationwide	Caucus of Development NGO Networks	Pork Barrel Watch: A Civil Society Monitoring System
Nationwide	Philippine Development Assistance Programme Inc.	Appraisal of the Muscovado Industry in the Philippines
Nationwide	NATCCO Employees Cooperative	Microfinance Best Practice in Cooperatives
Quezon	Philippine Community Organizer's Society	Healing the Sierra Madre Tragedy Victims
Quezon	Philippine Association for Intercultural Development Inc	Aerial Photography of Infanta, Real and Gen. Nakar in Quezon Province
Quezon City	National Federation of Cooperatives of Persons with Disability	Post Project Evaluation for the DepEd-PS Contract
Region 8	SAC - Diocese of Calbayog	"Defending our Forests" Campaign to Stop Commercial Logging and Mining in Samar Island
Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao	Various PO-NGO in partnership with CITEM (Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions)	Market Study and Development for Community-Based Enterprises in Priority Areas: Natural Products Expo East- Washington DC
Zamboanga del Sur	Economic Resource Center for Overseas Filipinos	Designing a Survey Instrument to Identify the Potentials of Tapping Overseas Filipinos for Local Development

* Some projects may have been completed or all funds may have been disbursed but the projects may still be active in the PEF files or list pending completion of audit, submission of reports or other needed documents.

Luzon folk keep alive Misa de Gallo …



CATHOLICS gather outside Quiapo Church in Manila to attend the first of nine daily dawn Masses. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

From page A1

disasters ravaged features of the church of the Our Lady of Grace parish in Mabalacat town.

During *Simbang Gabi*, however, the parish resurrects an old tradition, that of singing the Spanish-era *pastorella*. These are Latin Mass hymns sung à la opera.

"They're very dramatic, as if to entertain drowsy Mass goers," said Prof. Robby Tantingco, executive director of the Holy Angel University's Center for Kapampangan Studies.

Sung by a choir of the old and young, the singing of the pastorella is accompanied by violins and an organ.

It is also only in Mabalacat where the "*maitinis*," a church-based lantern-making contest, is practiced, according to Fr. Francis Musni, OSA. The lanterns are blessed and used in the procession to cap the nine-day dawn Masses and in preparation for the Misa de Aguinaldo on Christmas Eve.

Also among Kapampangan areas, it is only in Angeles City, in its nearby towns of Mabalacat and Magalang, and in Concepcion, Tarlac, where the *lubena* is practiced to this day, Tantingco said.

Lubena is a corruption of the novena or the nine-day Christmas dawn Masses. Villages hold their respective processions before the Mass is held.

Ten or 12 small star-shaped lanterns borne by hand and illuminated by candles or battery-lighted bulbs accompany the images of the saints. It is on Christmas Eve that all processions congregate on the parish grounds before the Mass.

Lubena was first held in Angeles City in 1830, according to accounts by the late local historian Mariano Henson.

But the *lubena* in Angeles has lost its elaborate elements. Then, the paper lanterns were shaped into fishes and lobsters whose parts moved. The lanterns now used in the procession are mostly star-shaped.

Eulogio Catahan of Barangay Cutcut is the lone surviving *lubena* lantern-maker. He still makes big fish lanterns but without the moving parts.

Why does the *lubena* tradition persist in Pampanga's northern areas and not in its southern or western towns? The answer still escapes cultural historians but presumably it is a continuing influence of the Recoletos, a faction in the Augustinian order, according to Tantingco.

Msgr. Francisco Lansang, vicar general of the Archdiocese of San Fernando and priest of the Holy Rosary Parish in Angeles City, said many Catholics still celebrate *Simbang Gabi* the traditional way.

In fact, even remote villages in the archdiocese, some accessible only via motorized boats, have been celebrating the nine-day pre-Christmas novena for a few years now.

"Just like the old days, people in these remote barangays wake up before dawn and walk toward their chapels for the Mass. They don't ride cars or jeepneys. They don't have to wear makeup and flashy clothes for everyone to see. These barrio folk truly feel the presence of the Lord in their midst while hearing the priests, who had to ride boats to reach them, celebrate the Mass," he said.

Ilocos Norte, Cagayan

In Paoay, Ilocos Norte, the *Simbang Gabi* reaches its high point on Christmas Eve. Churchgoers would gather at the town's auditorium for the annual "*tambura*," vernacular for a drum roll (although the word is derived from Spanish), while waiting for the tolling of the bells to signal the start of the Mass.

Tambura, traditionally held during Christmas Eve, has been in practice since Paoay residents could remember.

Residents, most of them elderly, show up at the town auditorium in their best clothes and spend hours dancing until 10 p.m. of Dec. 24. After the program, participants proceed to the church for the Mass.

Organized by town officials, the festivity has undergone changes from mere all-night dancing to the holding of raffles and contests to draw more residents and keep them awake while waiting for the pealing of the bells.

Other parishes around Ilocos Norte continue to portray the moment when the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph look for a place where Jesus Christ could be born.

The stage drama is traditionally played out during Christmas Eve before the Mass begins.

In Cagayan, dawn Masses are celebrated in village clusters due to the shortage of priests.

As other villagers wait for their turn to attend Mass, they continue to sing the long *Salamon*, a 2,500-line Ibanag Christmas carol in rhymed quatrains.

In Cagayan villages, the Salamon will be sung in the villages until Jan. 6, the Feast of the Epiphany.

Zambales

In the coastal village of Luklok in Palauig, Zambales, *Simbang Gabi* means unity among the residents in paying tribute to the birth of Jesus.

A month before the *Simbang Gabi* start, residents of the village organize themselves into groups consisting of 10 families each to talk about their roles in the novena.

Ildefonso del Fierro, a former Palauig vice mayor, said a group was tasked with ensuring that snacks were served to all churchgoers in the village after the Mass. The practice dates back to the pre-war years, according to Del Fierro.

Locals refer to the occasion as the "Simbang Kasiyahan Alay Kay Niño Jesus," which ends in dancing, singing and eating at midnight of Dec. 24.

In Nueva Ecija, Mon Valmonte, a native of Gapan City, said an orchestra used to accompany dawn Masses in various parishes in the province. The usual brass band that roamed the streets to wake up churchgoers at 3 a.m. is gone.

Food, family

In other areas of northern and Central Luzon, many churchgoers look forward to native delicacies served in makeshift stalls outside the churches.

Among these delicacies are *puto bumbong* (served in almost all provinces), *sinanglao* (a version of *pinapaitan* or a slightly bitter stew made from cow entrails, served in Ilocos Sur) and *miki* (noodle soup, also served in Ilocos Sur), *bibingka* (rice cake), *suman* and the native rice cakes *deko, inatata, patupat* and *tinubong* (served in Cagayan Valley). These are often served with native brewed coffee, tea or native chocolate.

After the Mass and over food, small conversations occur among family members and friends.

The young also seek their elders to touch their hands to their foreheads after the Mass.

Reports from Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Estanislao Caldez, Cristina Arzadon, Leoncio Balbin Jr. and Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Tonette Orejas, Cesar Villa, Jun Malig, Anselmo S. Roque and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Manila Water

Water interruption in Mandaluyong needed to upgrade pipelines

Investing in Pipelines for the Future

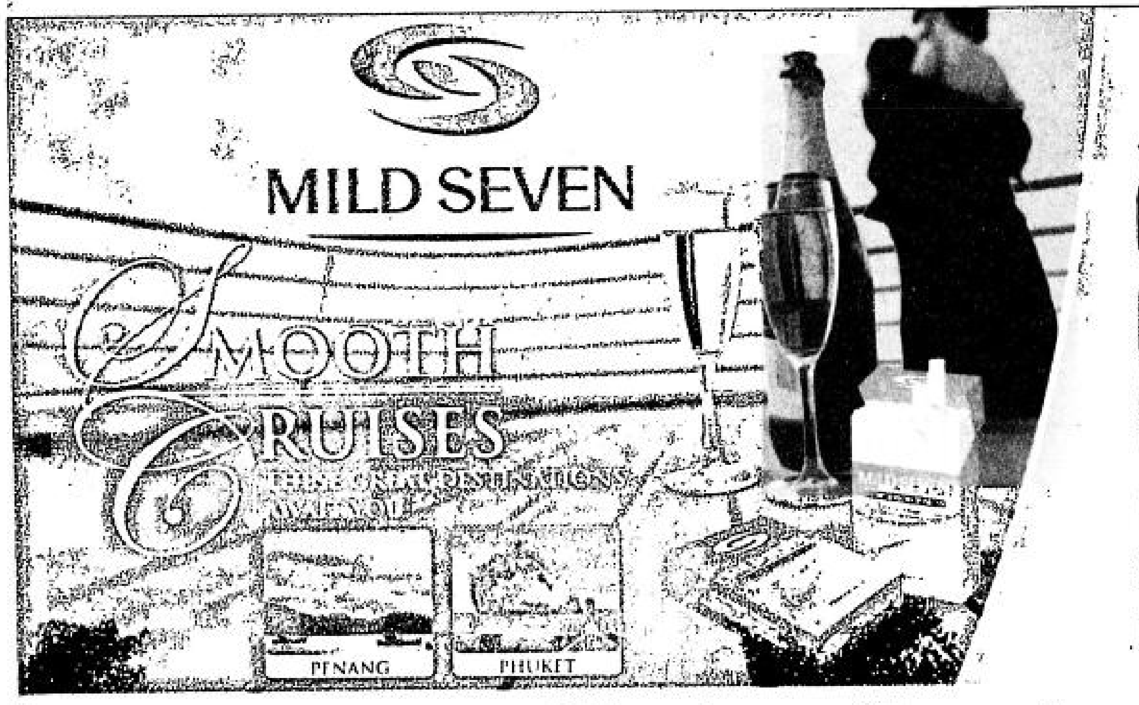
Manila Water is currently undertaking a pipe laying program to improve the distribution of water in the East Zone. As part of the program, an interconnection project along Nueve de Pebrero will be undertaken and will result in a temporary cutoff of water supply. The interruption will occur beginning 10:00 p.m., Monday, December 19, 2005, up to 6:00 a.m., December 20 and will affect Bgys. Barangka Drive, from Nueve de Pebrero to Boni Ave., portions of Fabella St., from Barangka Drive to Martinez, Libertad, from Calbayog to Barangka Drive, Bulusan, Arayat, Nueve de Pebrero, portion of Bgy. Malamig (Talumpong, Halcon, Basilan, Talayan, Camiguin, Tabayog, and Sulatan Sts.), Pleasant Hills, Welfareville and Mauway, all in Mandaluyong.

Manila Water Company advises all residents of the said areas to store enough water prior to the scheduled interruptions to avoid inconvenience.

For the latest update, please call our Customer Call Center Hotline at 1627.

Investing in pipelines for the future.

(PDI - Dec 19 2005)



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See Posters for details. Per BFAD Permit No. 0195, Series of 2005.

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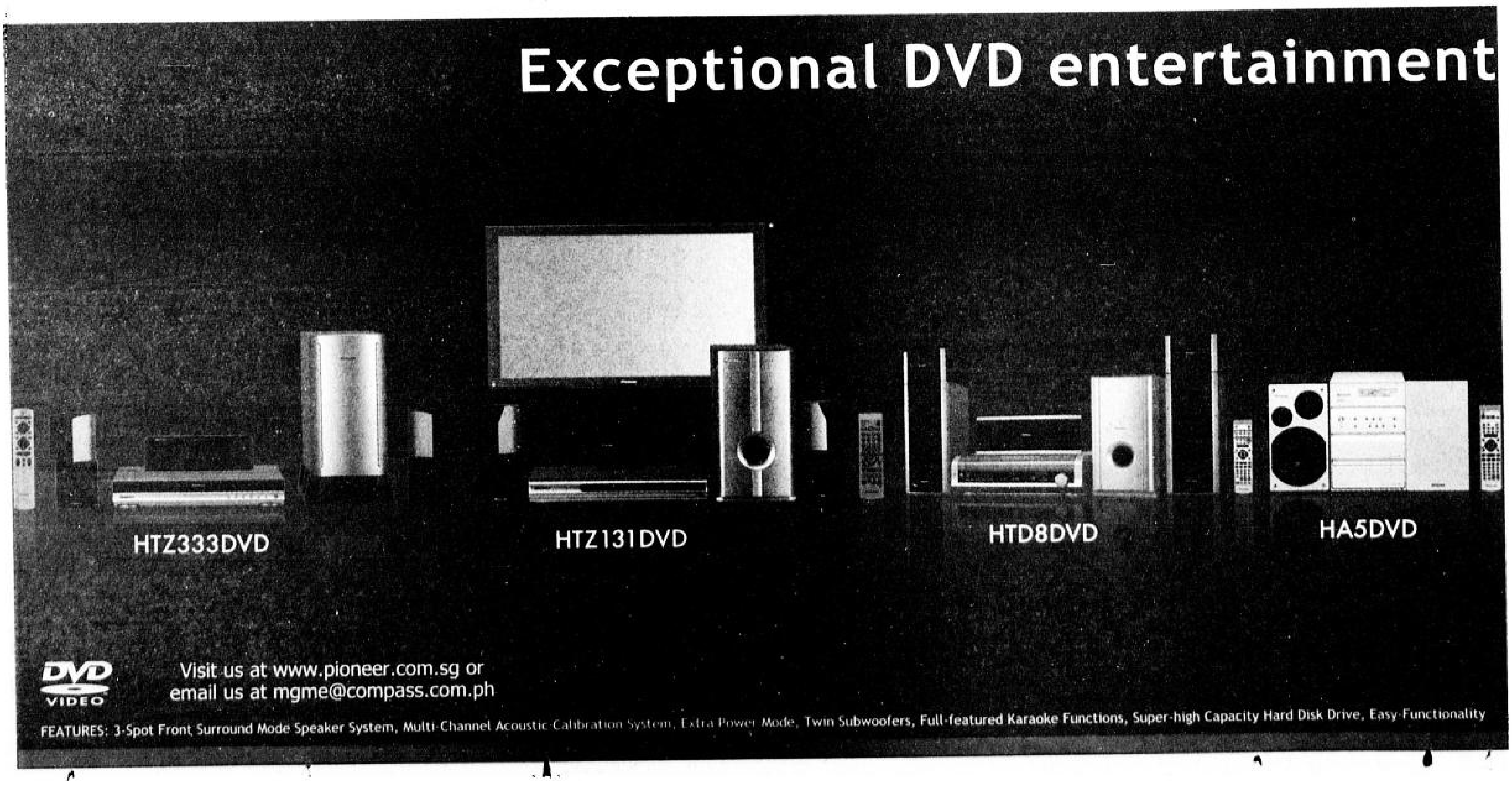

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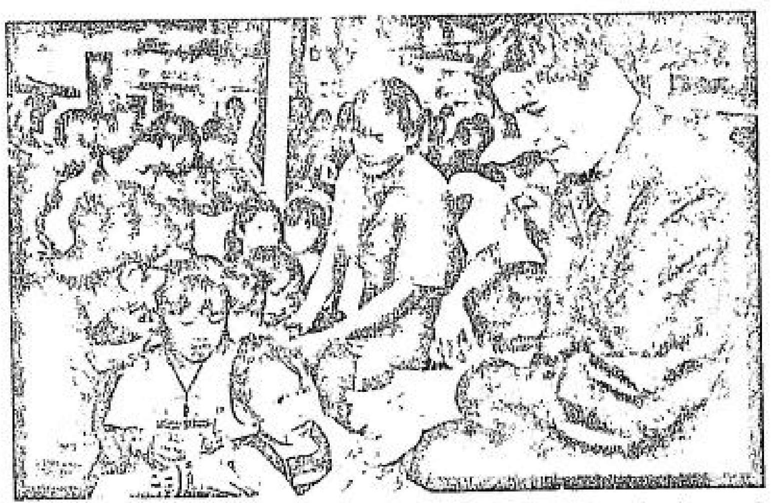


ACTOR Aga Muhlach is still at it, distributing toys and books donated by people to poor children, 11 years after he first thought of the MaAGA ang Pasko drive.

Number coding lifted

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE METROPOLITAN MANILA Development Authority (MMDA) yesterday announced the two-week suspension of the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program (UVVRP) effective today until Jan. 1, 2006.

This is the first time that the agency would be lifting the traffic reduction scheme during the holiday season. It would also be the longest by far this year, as previous suspensions had lasted only three days at the most.

It was not clear why the MMDA had ordered the suspension at a time when traffic in the metropolis is usually heavier as people flock to malls to do their Christmas shopping.

"It was the chairman (MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando) who ordered the suspension. He asked if it was possible and we said we could take a look at its effect. Besides, schools are on holiday break, and that would somehow lessen traffic volume," MMDA Traffic Operations Director (TOC) Executive Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said in a phone interview yesterday.

The UVVRP, more popularly known as the number coding scheme, has reduced traffic volume in the metropolis by at least 20 percent on weekdays, by barring vehicles from the road on certain days and at certain hours, based on the last digit of their license plates.

Whether the suspension would ease up or worsen traffic would only be seen upon on-site observation in the next few days, Vergel de Dios said.

But a warning to motorists: the suspension will not be effected in Makati which would continue to enforce its locally legislated number coding scheme.

The city would only suspend the traffic scheme on Dec. 24, 25, 31 and Jan. 1

MaAGA ang Pasko: 11 years and counting

By Margaux C. Ortiz

WHEN FIVE-YEAR-OLD MARICEL Casaljay woke up last Friday, thoughts of a hundred toys filled her mind. A kindergarten student from an impoverished barangay in Tondo, Casaljay was excited at the prospect of receiving a doll for Christmas.

"I would like a doll or a toy kitchen set, but I could always choose from what they would give us," she said goodnaturedly in Filipino, her eyes sparkling.

The girl was one of 100 children picked by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to participate in this year's MaAGA Bash, a Christmas toy and book donation drive launched by actor Aga Muhlach 11 years ago.

Since 1994, Muhlach, in cooperation with Jollibee Food Corp., has been distributing toys and books to poor children though his "MaAGA ang Pasko sa Jollibee" project.

Last week, the actor and JFC officials symbolically turned over some of the toys and books collected this year to the DSWD which is in charge of selecting the beneficiaries.

Muhlach said that from the 700,000 toys collected in 2004, they are aiming for the one-million mark this year.

METROBRIEFS

Beware of fake US treasury notes

FOLLOWING its recent seizure of fake US dollar bills and coins, the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has issued another warning against the proliferation of counterfeit US treasury notes. NBI National Capital Region (NCR) executive officer Rosauro Bautista said syndicates place the fake treasury notes inside weathered copper containers and sell them for as much as P30 million per box. "They convince the prospective buyer that the treasury notes were remnants from the war and could still be redeemed at the US treasury department for $1 billion," he said. "The victims often believe these shady groups because the US treasury notes look genuine," Bautista said. US authorities, however, have denied the existence of such notes, he added.

Margaux C. Ortiz

Photographer loses P1.7M to thieves

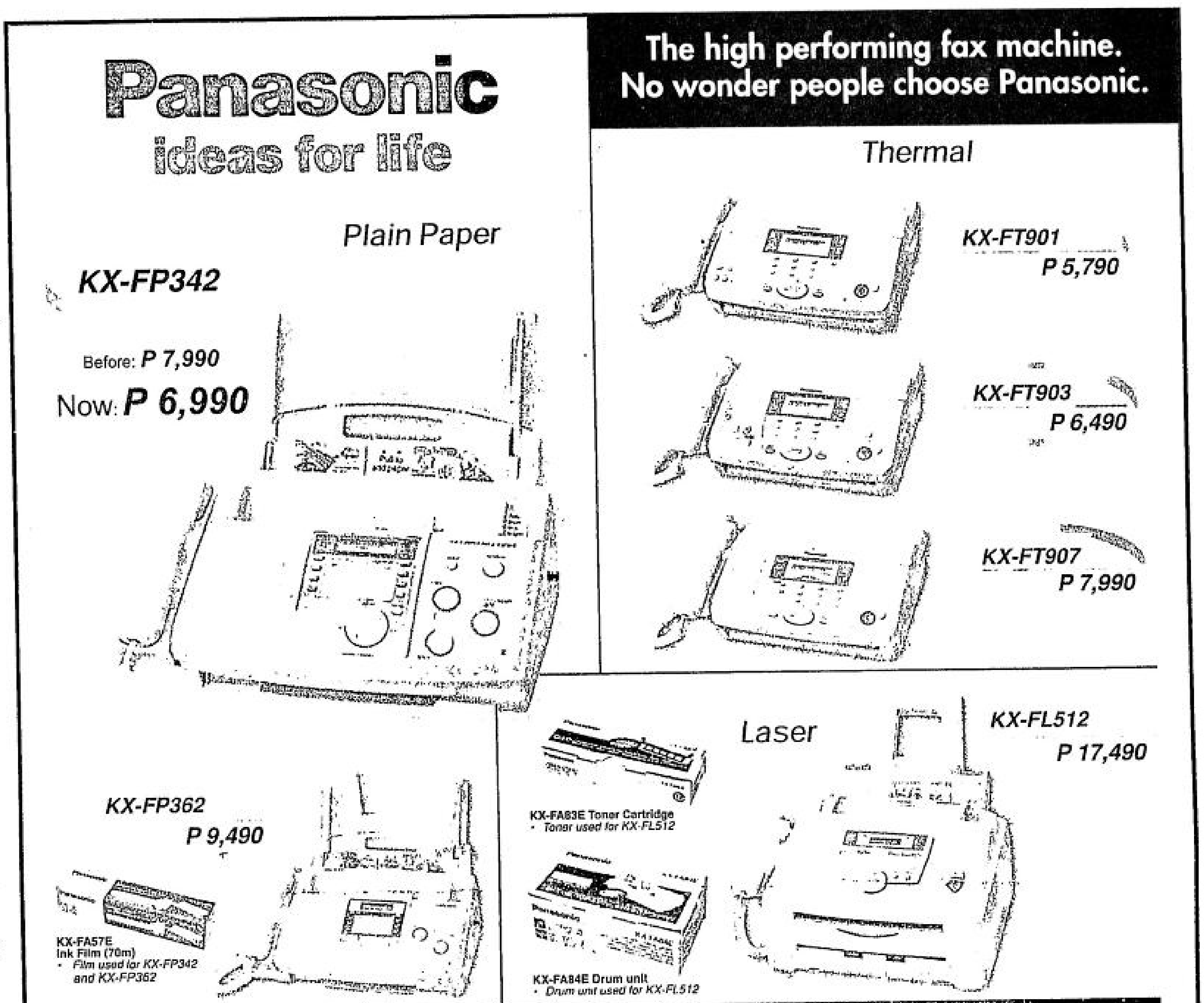
BURGLARS carted away P1.7 million worth of cameras and other equipment from a photography studio in Quezon City on Saturday. Alfredo Mendoza, a professional photographer, reported to the police that unidentified persons broke into his studio on Xavierville Avenue, Loyola Heights. Mendoza said the incident might have happened between 8:45 a.m. and 6 p.m., according to a report by investigator-on-case PO2 Gregorio Maramag. Stolen were a Mamiya RB67 medium-format camera, a Mamiya RZ67 medium-format camera, a Pentax 645N with a 9 mm lens, a Fujifilm FinePix S2 Pro, a 180 mm Mamiya SF lens, and a 50 mm Mamiya wide lens.

DJ Yap

Rebellion case transferred

THE REBELLION case filed against terror suspects tagged in several bomb plots nationwide was transferred to a family court last week after one of the accused was found to be a minor. The Makati Regional Trial Court Office of the Clerk of Court forwarded to the Makati RTC Branch 144 the case filed by the justice department early last month against suspected members of the Rajah Solaiman Movement (RSM) and the Abu Sayyaf Group. Among those who had been charged was a 17-year-old girl. She was detained after she was caught in Zamboanga last October with seven other alleged members of the RSM, a group of Muslim converts. The case was re-raffled on Thursday afternoon after Makati RTC Branch 146 Judge Encarnacion Moya, to whom the case had initially been elevated, ordered its transfer to a family court.

Tarra V. Quismundo



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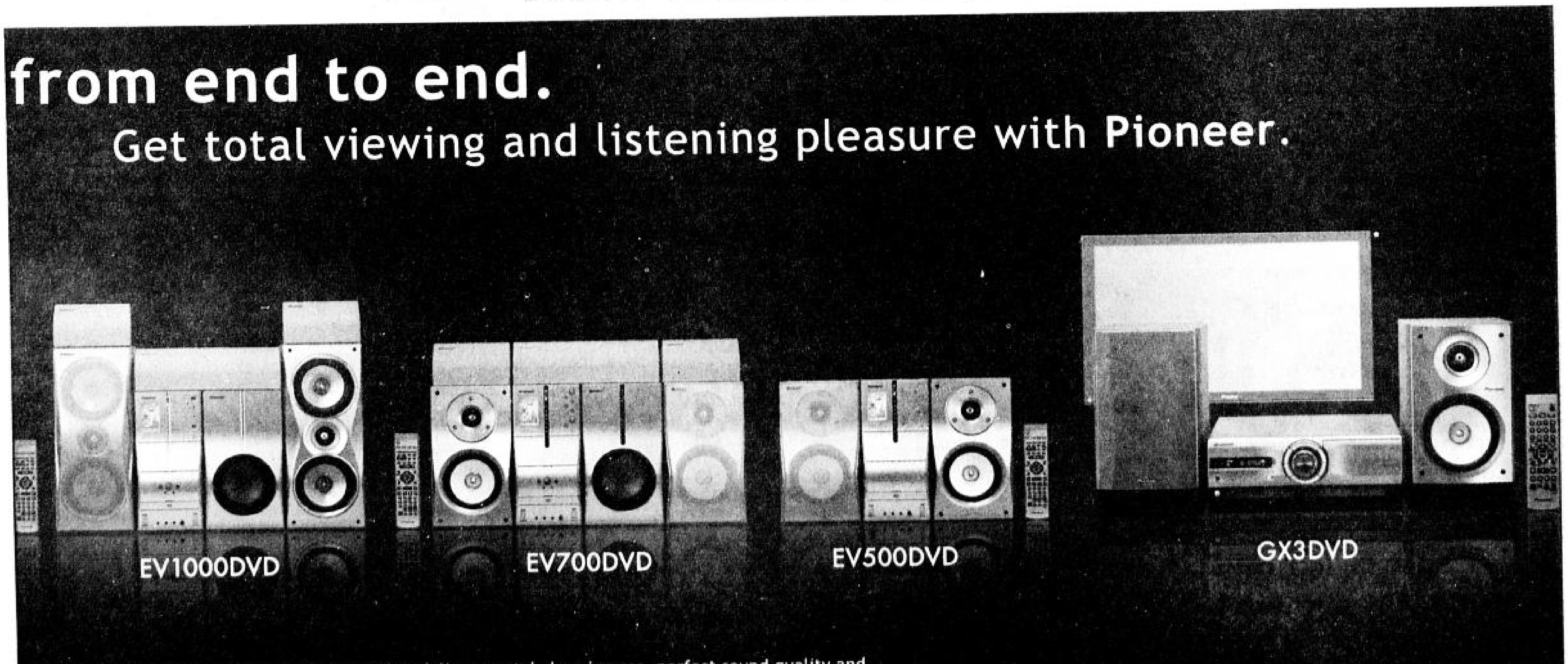

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Globe first to make 3G possible!

Innovation leader Globe Telecom is all set to pioneer yet another communication milestone by introducing 3G (third-generation) mobile technology to Filipinos. Over the past two months, Globe has conducted the first series of live public 3G demonstrations in the Philippines, where guests got a first-hand taste of the exciting new possibilities opened up by this technology. These public demonstrations followed successful trial calls conducted earlier this year, after Globe became the first Philippine telco to obtain a 3G trial license from the National Telecommunications Commission.

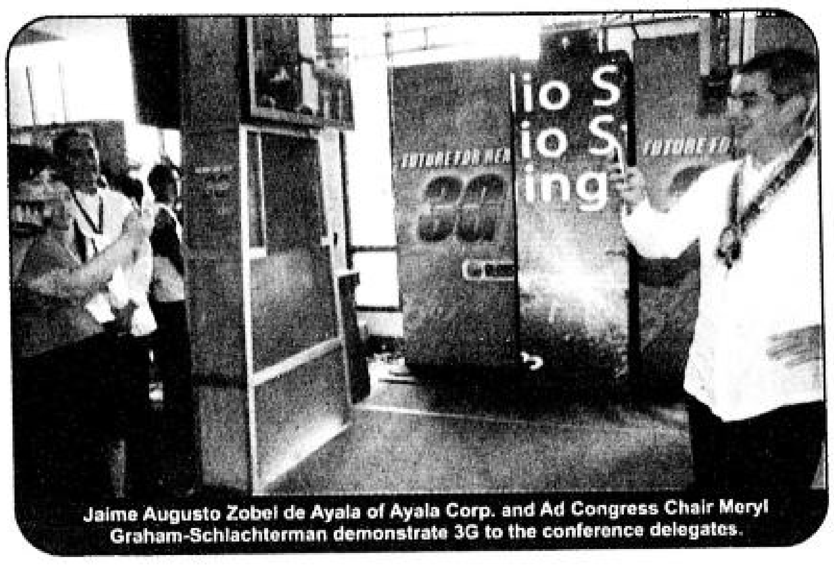
3G is the next big step in Globe's continuing effort to bring meaningful connectivity to Filipino consumers. It is the first mobile technology to enable video calls, in which parties in a conversation can see each other on their phone screens as they talk. It also greatly expands the potential of the familiar and ubiquitous cellphone by offering enhanced data and video streaming capabilities, as well as faster Internet connections and downloads. Just as it has already revolutionized mobile telephony in other countries, 3G is now poised to bring the future of communication closer to Filipinos.

3G wows business community

Globe held the first public 3G demonstration in the Philippines at a gathering of over a hundred top executives from major companies, during the awarding ceremonies of the Globe 2nd CEO Golf Cup. The tournament players -- among them some prominent CEOs and business leaders -- were able to watch their tee-offs and memorable shots via 3G video streaming. The live video calls and high-speed web browsing also earned the approval of many of Globe's corporate clients.

Former Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo and other prominent business leaders experienced the richer connectivity made possible by 3G.

Top executives and guests at the Globe 2nd CEO Golf Cup watched game highlights via 3G video streaming.


Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala of Ayala Corp. and Ad Congress Chair Meryl Graham-Schlachterman demonstrate 3G to the conference delegates.

Globe 3G takes the spotlight in Ad Congress

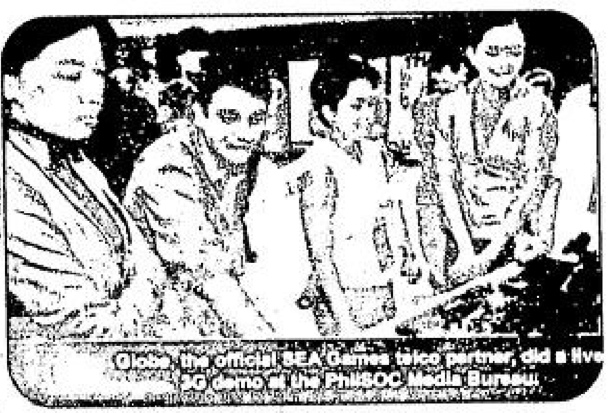
The next 3G demonstration was held during the 19th Philippine Advertising Congress in Cebu City, where Ayala Corporation President and CEO Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala conducted a video call conversation with Ad Congress Chairperson Meryl Graham-Schlachterman and received a live video call from Manila. Major conference highlights were also shown to the participants using 3G video streaming. The vast capabilities of Globe 3G got an enthusiastic reception from advertising practitioners who attended the Congress.

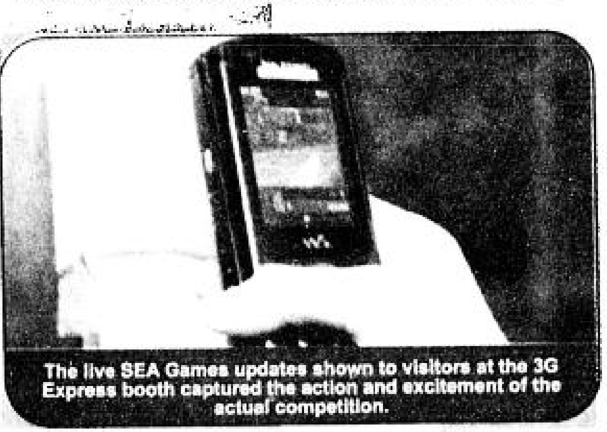
Ayala Corporation President and CEO Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala makes a live video call to Manila during the 19th Ad Congress in Cebu.

3G...posible!

As the official telecommunications provider of the recent 23rd Southeast Asian Games, Globe demonstrated 3G's exciting possibilities to members of the press and staff of the Philippine Southeast Asian Games Organizing Committee (PhilSOC) at the official SEA Games Media Bureau. Live updates from the ongoing competitions at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex were shown using 3G video streaming.

These video updates were also made available to the public at the Globe & Gift Gate 3G Express booth at the Glorietta Center in Makati. Visitors were able to experience video calls, video streaming with better viewing quality, music downloads, and high-speed Internet browsing. They also watched live video interviews with athletes on the SEA Games Philippine Team which were conducted via 3G.


Globe, the official SEA Games telco partner, did a live 3G demo at the PhilSOC Media Bureau.


The live SEA Games updates shown to visitors at the 3G Express booth captured the action and excitement of the actual competition.

Seeing stars with Globe 3G

presented even more fabulous surprises that made the wonders of 3G come alive for Globe subscribers. Lucky fans got a chance to chat with their favorite celebrities -- such as Geoff Eigenmann, Brad Turvey, Joross Gamboa and Roxanne Guinoo -- on a 3G-powered phone. Mall-goers flocked to the booth to witness the awesome potential of this technology of the future.

An excited fan greets her favorite celebrities using a 3G-powered phone.

Young idol Geoff Eigenmann talks to his fans via 3G.

Bringing global Pinoy families closer together via international video call

With its enormous potential to bridge people despite great distances, 3G has already made a significant impact on the life of one Filipino family. Delia Bautista, an overseas Filipino worker in Singapore, was able to talk to her family for the first time in eight years through a video call held at the 3G Express. Delia's two siblings, nephew, and niece came all the way from Bicutan for this emotional reunion, which was arranged in cooperation with the Philippine Embassy in Singapore. "I'm so happy that I got to see her and hear her voice after such a long time," said Delia's sister Lourdes. "This experience really makes Christmas much more joyful and special for us."

Globe subscribers were impressed by the speed and quality of 3G-powered video streaming and video calls.

Some of 3G's other functionalities, such as music downloads and web browsing, were also demonstrated to guests at the 3G Express.

"By introducing relevant and innovative technologies, Globe is continually working to serve and empower the Filipino consumer," says Globe President and CEO Gerry Ablaza. "We believe that 3G has the potential to enrich people's lives and strengthen relationships by allowing them to communicate with each other and access information in ways never before possible."

3G's revolutionary impact is bound to further enhance the mobile communication experience for Globe subscribers. Globe intends to make the services available in the Philippines by next year. Gear up for the future and get ready for 3G -- another life-changing innovation made possible by Globe!

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Sta. Lucia routs Coke

GAMES WEDNESDAY
(*Cuneta Astrodome*)
4:40 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs Ginebra
7:25 p.m.—Alaska vs San Miguel Beer

By June Navarro

ANTIPOLO CITY—ALEX CABAGnot rebounded from one of the worst shooting games by anyone in the Philippine Basketball Association in the last five years to lead Sta. Lucia to a dominating outing against Coca-Cola.

The Sta. Lucia rookie put a humiliating chapter in his young career behind and helped the Realtors repulse the Coca-Cola Tigers, 100-76, in the San Mig Coffee-Fiesta Conference last night at the Ynares Center.

Cabagnot bounced back with 14 points on 5-of-11 shooting, just a few night after going 0-of-13 in 32 minutes against Purefoods, the worst by any player in the last 5 1/2 years.

Johnny Abarrientos went 0-of-15 in 28 minutes against Pop Cola in the 2000 All-Filipino Cup while still playing for the Alaska Aces.

"I told him (Cabagnot) that it's all part of the game," said Sta. Lucia coach Alfrancis Chua after the Realtors sealed a 7-9 slate. "I can see the energy and effort in Alex so I was sure that he'd easily get over it."

Espino planted an elbow on Thomas' kisser while protecting the leather. A few possessions later, the Coca-Cola import retaliated by hitting Espino in the nape after a rebound play.

In the other game, Renren Ritualo fired 22 points as Air21 held its ground against Purefoods Chunkee,

STA. LUCIA/ A27

Harbour upsets G. Goose; FEI scores

GAMES JAN. 7 (San Andres Gym)
2 p.m.—Rain or Shine vs Far Eastern Insurance
4 p.m.—Montaña Pawnshop vs Granny Goose

HARBOUR CENTRE LEANED ON MARCY Arellano, Jay Coching and Robb Reyes in the stretch to upset Granny Goose, 74-70, yesterday in the 2006 PBL Heroes Cup at the La Salle Greenhills Gym.

Arellano scored six of his nine points in the last three minutes while Coching, a new recruit, and Reyes combined for three charities and two rebounds in leading Harbour Centre to its fourth win in nine games.

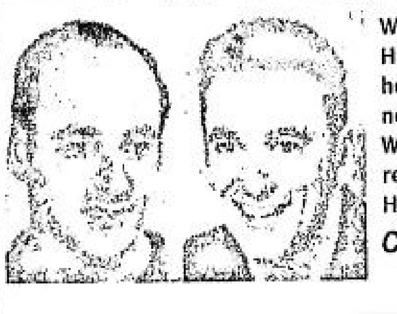
The Snackmasters slipped to 5-4, their bid for an outright semis berth now in peril. Rain or Shine took second at 5-3.

"It's sweet, especially beating your mentor," said Gallent, referring to Granny Goose coach Joe Lipa.

Aside from the inspired performances of Arellano and Coching, Gallent also paid tribute to the team's defense, saying: "We recovered because of our defense, especially on [JR] Quiñahan."

In the second game, Far Eastern Insurance also kept its quarterfinal bid alive by downing Toyota Otis, 79-76, for its third win in nine starts. Toyota fell to 2-7.

HARBOUR/ A26



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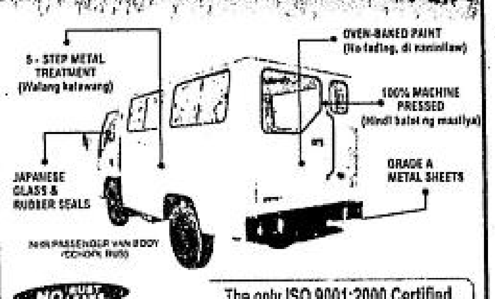
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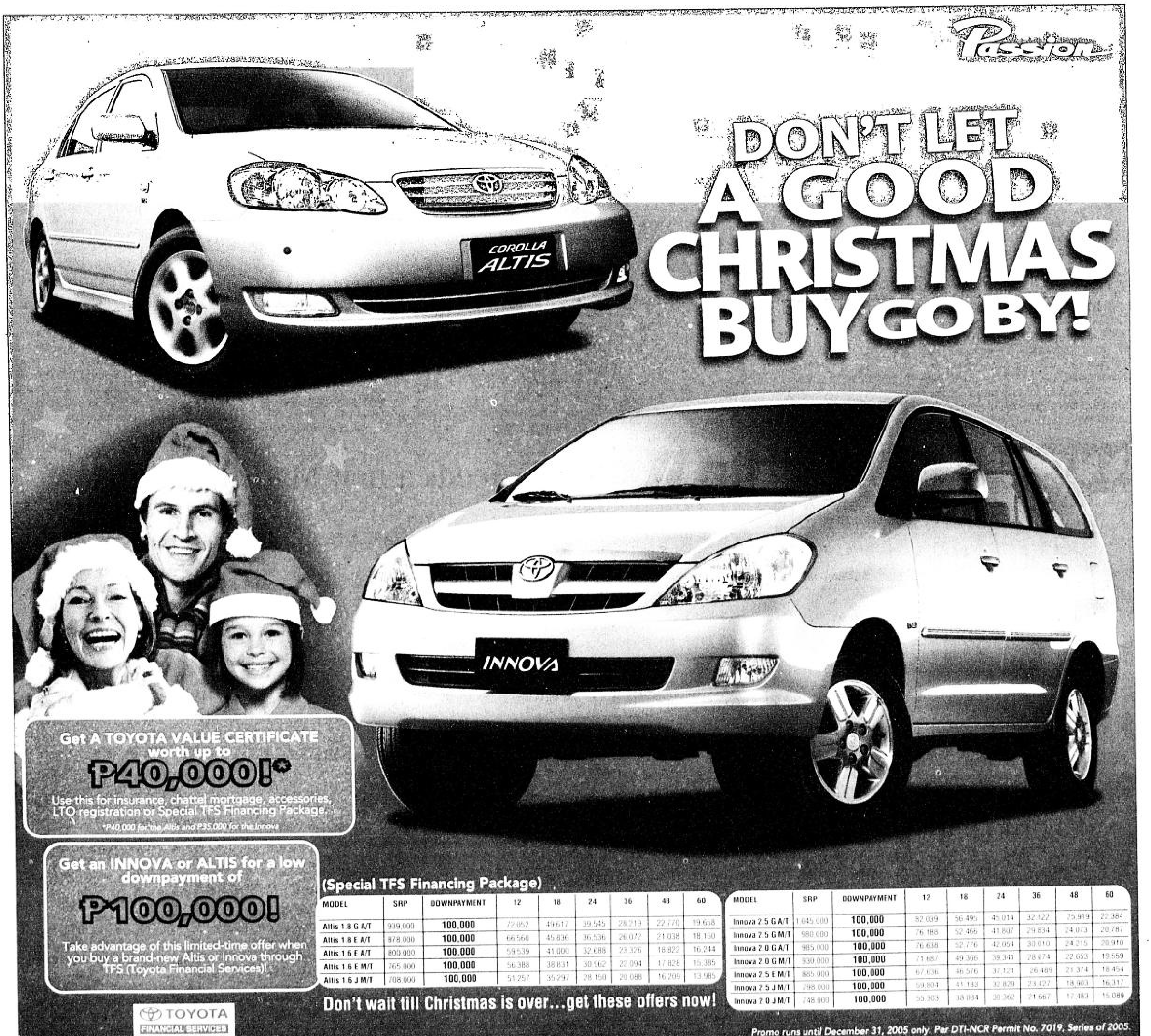

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Altis 1.8 E A/T	878,000	100,000	66,560	45,836	36,536	26,072	21,038	18,160
Altis 1.6 E A/T	800,000	100,000	59,539	41,000	32,688	23,326	18,822	16,244
Altis 1.6 E M/T	765,000	100,000	56,388	38,831	30,962	22,094	17,828	15,385
Altis 1.6 J M/T	708,000	100,000	51,257	35,297	28,150	20,088	16,209	13,985

MODEL	SRP	DOWNPAYMENT	12	18	24	36	48	60
Innova 2.5 G A/T	1,045,000	100,000	82,039	56,495	45,014	32,122	25,919	22,384
Innova 2.5 G M/T	980,000	100,000	76,188	52,466	41,807	29,834	24,073	20,787
Innova 2.0 G A/T	985,000	100,000	76,638	52,776	42,054	30,010	24,215	20,910
Innova 2.0 G M/T	930,000	100,000	71,687	49,366	39,341	28,074	22,653	19,559
Innova 2.5 E M/T	885,000	100,000	67,636	46,576	37,121	26,489	21,374	18,454
Innova 2.5 J M/T	798,000	100,000	59,804	41,183	32,829	23,427	18,903	16,317
Innova 2.0 J M/T	748,000	100,000	55,303	38,084	30,362	21,667	17,483	15,089

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Streaking Juggernaut overwhelms Juvenile race foes

By Musong R. Castillo

JUGGERNAUT PATIENTLY BID HER TIME then came up with a mammoth kick in the backstretch that no one could match to rule the P1.6 million Philracom Juvenile Championship over Special Edition with plenty to spare yesterday.

Jonathan Hernandez guided Juggernaut behind pacesetter Million Dollar before zooming past the fading colt in the far turn and leaving everyone eating her dust for a five-length win worth a cool million at the Santa Ana Park.

It was the fifth straight victory and the third major stakes title for the undefeated offspring of Mr. Sutter-Plate Lady, whose handlers are now eyeing no less than the Triple Crown series next year.

"She will be rested, at least four to six weeks," said trainer Rey Henson in Filipino. "After that, we will prepare for the Triple Crown next year."

Sent off as the overwhelming first choice, Juggernaut ran a race that was out of her character, breaking out of the gates leisurely and coming from behind to win.

Juggernaut clocked an impressive 1 minute 41 seconds over the mile (24.5-23.5-24.5-27.5.

Her time was just more than a second off the track record of 1:39.6 jointly held by Real Spicy and Real Top.

Special Edition nipped Jet Sutter for second worth P376,750.

Dixie The Younger, the Juvenile colt champion, arrived fourth for P84,000 even as Aristeo Puyat won P50,000 as the winning breeder.

Para Games: RP moves up to fifth place

THAILAND VIRTUALLY CLINCHED THE OVERall title with still two days left even as the Philippines captured six gold medals yesterday to hike its total to 13 in the 3rd Asean Para Games at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

The Filipinos won two golds each in chess and table tennis and one apiece in athletics and swimming to overtake the Indonesians and the Singaporeans from seventh to fifth place in this weeklong multi-event competition featuring the best differently abled athletes from Southeast Asia.

National Master Henry Lopez struck gold in the individual event for both the visually impaired and handicapped class, sweeping all his five games which include wins over Indonesians Eddy Suryanto and Maxum Firdaus in the final two rounds at the GSIS Hall in Pasay.

Suryanto, who defeated individual handicapped event champion Fide Master Sander Severino, a wheelchair-bound polio victim, in the penultimate round, settled for the silver medal and Firdaus the bronze.

Lopez and Severino, a former national kiddies champion, then teamed up with Alexis Elinon in the team event to become the country's first triple gold medal winners in the Games presented by the PSC, PCSO, and DPWH.

In table tennis, visually impaired Josephine Medina sparked the Nationals' onslaught by accounting for two golds and one silver at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Medina topped the singles event by beating Vietnam's Tran Nguyen Quynh, who settled for a silver, while Viet Thi Kim Van also of Vietnam finished with a bronze.

She then partnered with Minnie Ramos in the doubles for her second gold medal, outclassing the Vietnam pair of Tran and Viet.

Capping her sterling performance was a silver medal finish in the mixed doubles with Rogelio Cesar behind eventual winner Mai Ngoc Trung and Viet Thi Kim Van of Vietnam.

This meet held right after the Southeast Asian Games is backed by PLDT-Smart, STI, Philpost and Philspada, NBN 4, City Government of Manila, with support from American President Line, Pfizer, Inc., Red Ribbon, Crossover 105.1, dzSR Sports Radio, IBM, Mettephione and GSIS.

At the Rizal Oval, paraplegic Jerico Openio ruled the discus throw with a heave of 20.33 meters to complete a golden double.

CZARINA Mae Arevalo smashes her way to the crown, giving the Filipino audience something to cheer about. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

PCA OPEN

Arevalo bags crown

Crafty Korean ace brings down Tierro

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DEFENDING CHAMPION CHUNG HEE-seok used his all-around game to humble Patrick John Tierro even as Czarina Mae Arevalo displayed her old form to capture the men's and women's singles titles of the PCA Open tennis championships yesterday at the PCA shell courts.

Chung, 30, allowed Tierro to display his vaunted power game, dropping the first set and the first three games of the second before clawing his way back for a 3-6, 7-6 (3), 6-0, 6-1 victory—his third straight in the event.

"He played very well but I think he got tired after taking the first set," said Chung through an interpreter. "I tried to be patient and watched how he would execute his game plan."

Arevalo, the RP's No. 1, didn't hold her punches against 13-year-old Bambi Zoleta, using her thunderous groundstrokes to pull off a 6-1, 6-3 victory.

Chung won the P80,000 top prize while Tierro settled for P40,000 in the event presented by Gov. Muslim "Wahab" Akbar.

Arevalo took home the P40,000 top purse, while Zoleta, a high school sophomore at Mary Hill College in Lucena City, got P15,000.

Czarina Mae also teamed up with Jennifer Saret to down Zoleta and her sister Bien, 6-3, 5-7, 6-1, and capture the women's doubles title, even as Chung and brother Chung Hee-sung overpowered Tierro and Johnny Arcilla, 7-5, 6-3, for the men's doubles plum.

The event was backed by Solar Sports, Accel, PVL Restaurant-Little Lawrence, PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, Sun Village, Las Palmas, Powerade, Coke, Stronghold Insurance, San Miguel, Maresa Creative Group, Cel Consolidator, PMS Ship Agency, MILS, Equitable-PCI, Burlington, Dunlop and Pixel Project.

Athletes get X-mas bonus from GMA

PRESIDENT ARROYO WILL PERSONALly hand out the cash incentives for the winning national athletes during the 23rd Southeast Asian Games on Dec. 22 as a Christmas blowout for capturing the overall championships for the first time.

The awarding of some P25 million cash incentive as defined by the Republic Act 9064 will be held at the Malacañang Palace with the gold medal winner taking P100,000, silver P50,000 and bronze P10,000.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Ramirez said the President wanted the awarding expedited so the athletes can get their bonuses before the Christmas.

"The President was very elated and wanted to show her pleasure over the feat of our national athletes," said Ramirez.

Some 200 athletes are set to fly to Hong Kong today as part of their incentives. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Santos, Hur Chair's Cup topnotchers

RICHIE SANTOS AND JONG TAE HUR WERE the big winners on the course while Francis Puzon II brought home the jackpot prize on pure luck as the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club wrapped up the year with another successful Chairman's Cup tournament at its Masters and Legends courses in Carmona, Cavite.

Santos, a jet ski champion whose family owns the Cinderella chain of stores, scored a gross of 87 at the Legends course for a net 51 under par that was just too hot to handle for the rest of the more than 700 players who participated in the tourney honoring MSGCC chair of the board Robert John Sobrepeña.

He claimed the low net plum by nine strokes over Japanese expatriate Tomoki Kabuto and Toti del Pilar, who went on to top their respective divisions.

Puzon didn't get himself a trophy for playing well but drove home the coveted Mitsubishi Lancer GLX which was raffled off after nobody scored a hole-in-one during the three-day competition.

Nestle, MRT and Golforce were the major backers of the tourney with Starmaker, Rudy Project, Yakult Phils., Newlife Center, Bayo, Golf Shop at Baron Travel, Club Leisure Management Corp., Camp John Hay Development Co., Citibank, Philippine Wine Merchants and American Express.

Sobrepeña handed out the prizes to the winners with sports and games chair Danny Samaniego and also thanked the members for their patronage of the club and support of its many tournaments and activities.

Korean members won the other major raffle prizes with Beom Myung Kim taking the El Nido vacation package, Kim Jung Soo the Wilson golf set and Young Ja Kwon the Royal Carribean and Korean Air package.

The tournament results: Overall Net: Richard Santos 51; Overall Gross: Jong Tae Hur 72; Class A: 67 Lito Abiera, 68 Joel Altea III, 69 Benjamin Sarmiento; Class B: 66 Hanson So Sr., 67 Carlos dela Rosa II, 68 Hong Myung Chang; Class C: 62 Mario Badillo, 64 Edwin Ermita, 65 Ryuichi Mitarai Class; D: 60 Tomoki Kabuto, 61 Mark Chester Go, 62 Felix Chua Jr.; Class E: 60 Toti del Pilar, 64 Joseph Nuyda, 66 Julio Gregorio; Ladies I: 67 Claudine Garcia, 67 Nini Samaniego, 68 Agnes de Kok; Ladies II: 64 Florence Okiyama, 65 Ahbee Tayao, 65 Irene Siopongco; Seniors I: 66 Estelito Madrid, 67 Bert Lagaya, 68 Jun Yabut; Seniors II: 62 Tony de Leon, 66 Alfredo Javellana, 66 Jose Valle; Sponsors/Guests: 61 Tito Cosico, 61 Noli Paurom, 64 Pong Manuel

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Harbour...

From page A25

The scores:

First Game

HARBOUR 74—Yeo 13, Paterno 13, Tenorio 11, Coching 10, Arellano 9, Reyes 6, Menor 4, Dy 4, Alonzo 4, Gaco 0, Luanzon 0.

GRANNY GOOSE 70—Ibañes 11, Lanete 10, Quiñahan 10, Concha 10, Grijaldo 10, Almeda 6, Santos 3, Latonio 2, Gavino 2, David 2, Cruz 2, Alfad 2, Ferrer 0, Saladaga 0.

Quarters: 24-19, 43-30, 54-54, 74-70.

Second Game

FAR EASTERN INS. 79—Villamin 13, Sierra 12, Marquez 11, Bravo 10, Gatumbato 10, Estrada 7, Yee 6, Latoreno 6, Gamboa 2.

TOYOTA OTIS 76—Aban 24, Devance 15, Aldave 10, Bautista 9, Tagupa 9, Capati 5, Andaya 2, Rodriguez 2, Larong 0, Alcaraz 0, Pinera 0, Daa 0, Oreta 0.

Quarters: 20-13, 39-33, 53-55, 79-76.

NCA 7-cock derby today

THE NATIONAL COCKERS ASSOCIATION (NCA) presents another 7-cock derby at San Juan Coliseum today. About 60 fights are lined up today beginning at 6 p.m. with Rizal Gov. Casimiro "Ito" Ynares and Richard Bates as hosts. Meanwhile, the Sundance Group of Danny Valero and Phil Say will host the third NCA derby on Jan. 9 and 11. The NCA remained as the most durable among all associations of cockfight enthusiasts in the Philippines.

Makati cockfest round 4 up

ROUND FOUR OF MAKATI COLISEUM'S SUPER cockfest, the "Pamaskong Salpukan 6-Cock Derby," sizzles at 5 p.m. today with 60 matches on tap. The awaited entries from Hong Kong and Japan will be fielded today by Noriaki Morita, Michael Miguel, Jackson Chua and H. Malby. Interested cockers may field an entry in Wednesday's fifth round of eliminations (3-cock). Entry fee is P11,000. The WTJ Sports and Amusement Corporation, headed by promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co, has put up a prize of P3 million plus a brand-new Toyota Innova. For details, call 8963545 and 8956475.

RP needs a new Manny Pacquiao

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

AN EXTENDED SEARCH FOR MANNY Pacquiao in Kidapawan City on Saturday produced no visible results.

At best, there were only raw hints of the famous boxer's ring flair during a long hunt that went past midnight.

Glenn Porras, 20, clinched the Philippine Boxing Federation bantamweight title after exhausting doubtful power and limited skills against a plodding, muscular Edgar Gabihan.

But, despite winning a national belt inside the filled AMAS Gymnasium, Porras, 6-win, one-loss, will have to try hard again.

The handsome local boy simply failed to make it as candidate to be the next Manny Pacquiao. Not by a mile.

***

A happy revelation, and therefore apt birthday gift for Gov. Manny Piñol of North Cotabato that night, was light flyweight Merchito Gesta. The former muay thai practitioner displayed enviable balance and splendid rhythm in conquering veteran Leo Escobido.

But Gesta, tabbed as a future world champ, honestly expressed doubt he could soon measure up to Pacquiao's power.

Rex Peñalosa, another Piñol favorite, has improved and threw shorter, crispier combinations to show the makings of a knockout artist. Sweet-punching Tommy Terrado also bears watching.

But, to repeat, the latest search for the next Pacquiao in progressive Kidapawan has produced no tangible results.

***

We don't know if there are other provincial officials similarly caught in a frenzied hunt for world-class boxing talents in their locality like Manny Piñol.

Out in Cebu City, there's sportsman Tony Aldeguer who never tires discovering and training gifted young fighters.

Gov. Joel de los Reyes of Palawan is said to be involved in his own hunt for future world-beaters.

What's great here is that Pacquiao's sensational rise to world boxing stardom, which has brought with it tremendous riches, has fueled a boxing renaissance hereabouts.

The mere mention of Pacquiao's name, anywhere in the country, never fails to fuel thrill and rich expectations.

***

Yes, there's this growing, no-nonsense demand for the new or the next Manny Pacquiao. Whatever.

What's actually unknown to many, and this includes those who work very close with the man, is this fact: there's one fool-proof way Pacquiao could avenge his loss to Mexico's Erik Morales.

Pacquiao must himself succeed in finding a new Manny Pacquiao.

No kidding. Your reporter here is not trying to be cute or simplistic.

This is no condescending talk: Manny Pacquiao can enhance his chances against Morales in their Jan. 21 rematch only if he shuns the shallow ways and style of the slugger who lost to the Mexican great on March 19, 2005.

***

It's very clear. But it's also not very simple.

The great thing here is that Manny Pacquiao need not travel long and hard to come by the secret.

The formula is right there. It's within him.

In his first fight against Morales, Pacquiao was definitely stronger, faster.

But he lost because he was the inferior fighter, mainly when it came to the footwork test.

He got cut. He got outboxed. He suffered.

Pacquiao lost because he boxed blind and dumb.

***

It was like this: Pacquiao entered the ring thinking, quite honestly, that he could slam, run over and finish off Morales.

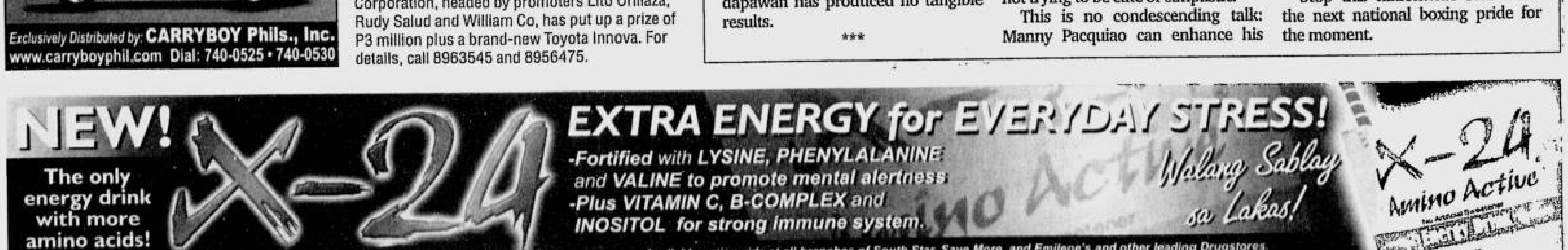
He started out like a bull and ended up deluding himself.

Of course, Pacquiao and his team would offer assorted alibis, like thicker fight gloves and internal distractions.

But we still have that Pacquiao pre-fight pronouncement on tape wherein he said he would just toy with Morales-"Alin, si Morales, paglalaruan ko lang `yan."

Manny Pacquiao will have to find a new, better self.

Stop this nationwide search for the next national boxing pride for the moment.



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Mendoza captures 4th national duathlon title

By Jasmine W. Payo

CLARK—RYAN MENDOZA HAD A **simple plan: Establish a big lead right from the start.**

The 29-year-old Mendoza did just that, capturing his fourth straight title in the National Duathlon Championship here yesterday.

"I pulled away from the first run because I know everyone was focused on me," said Mendoza in Filipino after the grueling race that started and wound up at the Centennial Expo in the Clark Special Economic Zone.

Mendoza, a second class airman of the Air Force, ruled the 10K run-40K bike-5K run in 1 hour, 49 minutes and 58 seconds to bag the P10,000 top prize.

He finished more than five minutes ahead of his RP national teammate Jeff Valdez, who placed second in 1:55:37. Tour Pilipinas campaigner Augusto Benedicto was third, nearly two minutes later in 1:57:25.

"I expected to win because I really prepared for this," said Mendoza, a native of Guagua, Pampanga.

Mendoza was so confident that he even competed in a 10K fun run in Pampanga a day before the big race that drew nearly 200 participants.

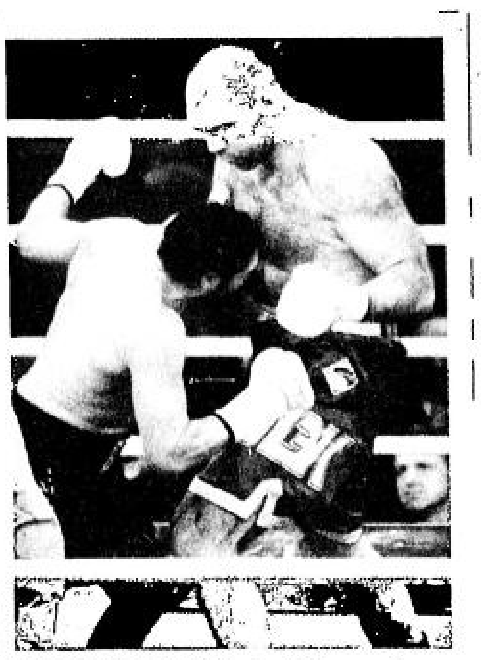
"I made that as my warm-up exercise," he said.

In the women's side, Rizzo Tangan captured her first major title with a time of 2:31:36.

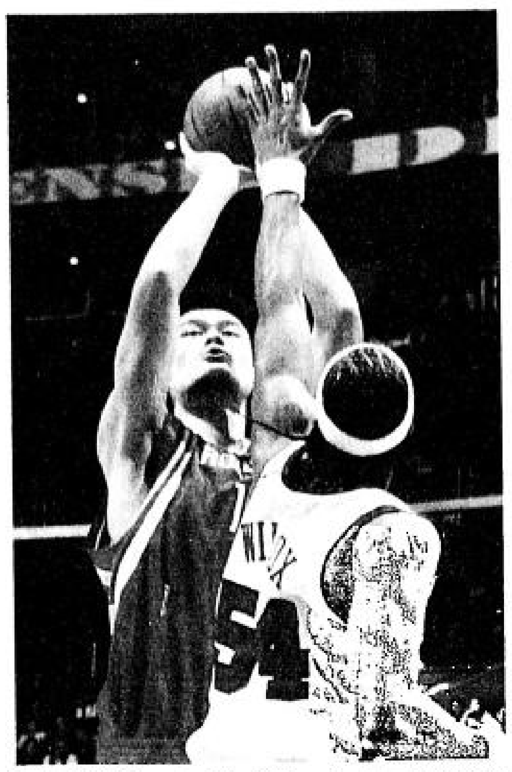
The 35-year-old creative director posted a two-minute edge over Sen. Pia Cayetano, who finished in 2:33:46. Doray Cortez took third place at 2:38:44.

Other winners in the standard distance event were Johans Tan at 2:07:04 in the 16-19 age group, Joseph Millanes at 2:02:52 (20-24 group) Franklin Peñalosa at 2:03:38 (25-29 group), Hiroshi Takeo at 2:08:37 (30-34 group), Taro Shirato at 2:01:32 (35-39), Arnold Andres at 2:05:02 (40-44 group), Leonardo Ariola at 2:23:07 (45-49 group) and Ronaldo Valix at 2:26:40 (50-54).

In the sprint distance competition, Michelle McTavish, the 24-year-old daughter of renowned boxing referee Bruce McTavish, ruled the executive category at 1:33:33.



BIGGEST, BEST: Nikolay Valuev rocks John Ruiz on the way to winning the WBA heavyweight title Sunday in Berlin. At 323 pounds and standing 7 feet tall, Valuev became the tallest and heaviest boxer to win the title. AP



ROCKETS center Yao Ming shoots over Chris Wilcox of the Los Angeles Clippers. AFP

Clippers end Rockets' run

LOS ANGELES—SAM CASSELL HAD 22 points, Elton Brand scored nine of his 20 points in the final 6 minutes and the Los Angeles Clippers snapped the Houston Rockets' five-game winning streak with an 89-81 victory Saturday.

Tracy McGrady scored 25 of his 29 points in the first half for the Rockets, whose loss was their first in the last 10 meetings with the Clippers. The Rockets are 0-12 this season when they score fewer than 90 points.

Cuttino Mobley scored 18 points for the Clippers, who played without No. 2 scorer Corey Maggette for the sixth straight game because of a sprained left foot. *AP*

COMPLETE NBA RESULTS: Cleveland 115, Miami 107; Indiana 102, New York 96; Detroit 103, Charlotte 78; Memphis 91, Phoenix 87; Utah 88, Milwaukee 80; Chicago 118, Boston 86; San Antonio 90, Sacramento 89

Sta. Lucia. . .

From page A25

110-109, to end the classification round with a second-running 9-7 record.

The Giants, who already advanced to the semifinals earlier, finished the eliminations with 10 wins and six losses.

The scores:

First Game

STA. LUCIA 100—Duremdes 28, Owens 15, Cabagnot 14, Espino 11, Calimag 9, Omolon 9, Aquino 6, Cuan 2, Tolomia 2, Gonzales 2, Mendoza 2, Calli 0, Sta. Maria 0.

COCA-COLA 76—Thomas 29, Reavis 10, Antonio 10, Arigo 9, Miranda 6, Peek 6, Singson 3, Mamaril 2, Juinio 1, Espinosa 0, Wainwright 0.

Quarters: 23-23, 40-45, 63-61, 100-76.

Second Game

AIR21 110—Ritualo 22, David 16, De Ocampo 15, Daniels 13, Arboleda 13, Tubid 11, Fran 8, Gonzales 5, Ferriols 3, Se 2, De Ocampo 2, Canaleta 0.

PUREFOODS 109—Chandler 24, Simon 19, Salvador 16, Raymundo 16, Yee 8, Artadi 7, Yap, James 5, Limpot 4, Yap, Roger 4, Castillo 4, Laure 2, Pingris 0, Billones 0.

Quarters: 38-27, 65-44, 86-65, 110-109.

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Manolo R. Iñigo

Due to transmission problems, Manolo Inigo's Clean Living will be published tomorrow

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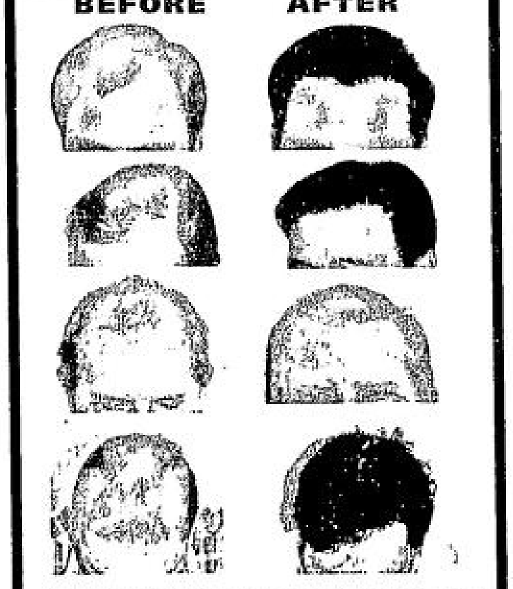

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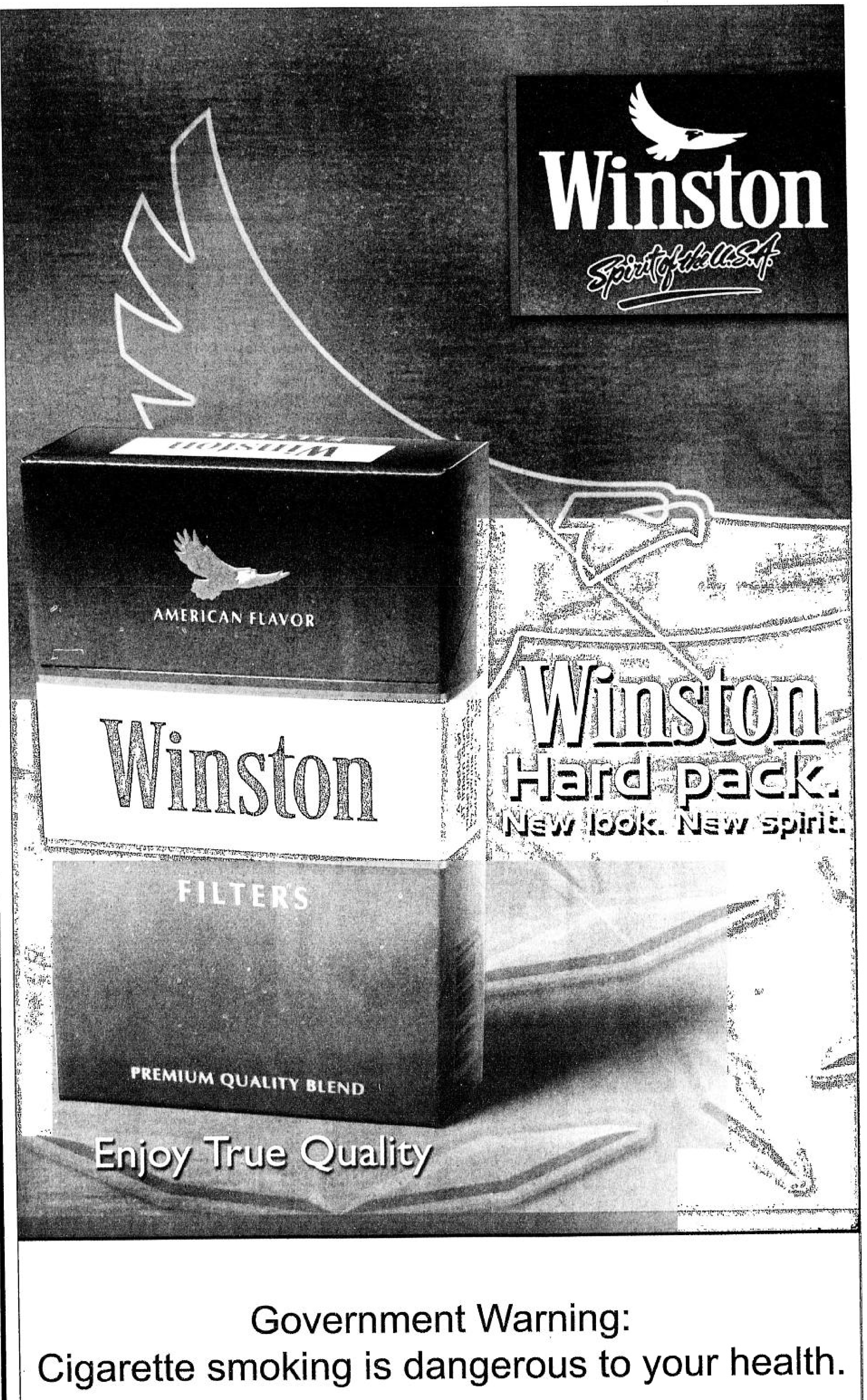

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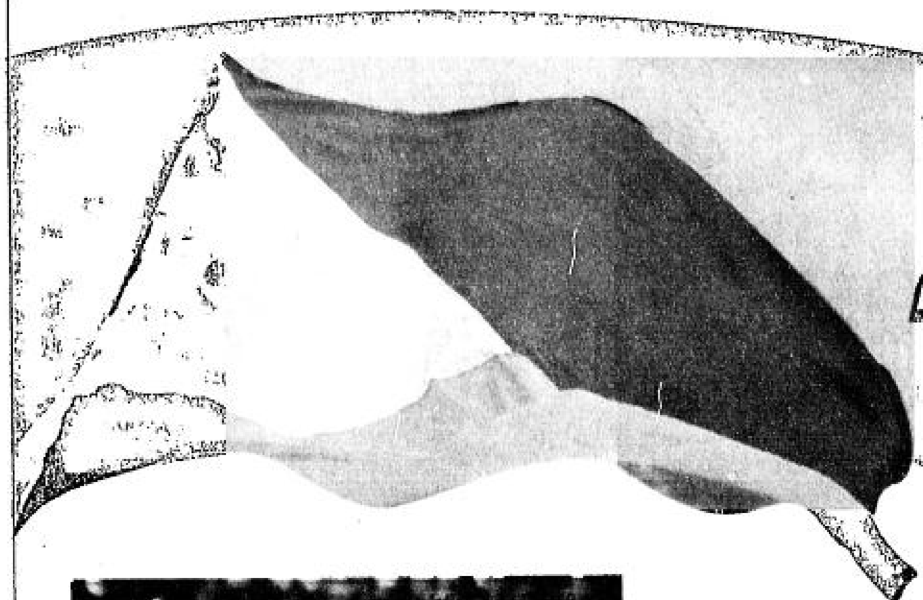
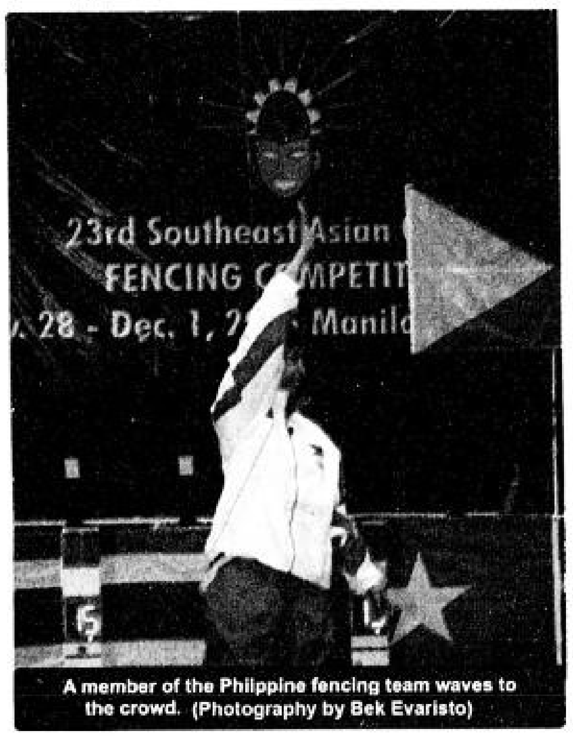


Winning athletes proclaim, "Basta Pinoy, Posible!"

The home crowd cries, *"Basta Pinoy...Posible!"* (Photography by Ruel and Au Soriano)

A winning athlete proudly flashes his hard-earned gold medal. (Photography by Bok Bituin)



A member of the Philippine fencing team waves to the crowd. (Photography by Bek Evaristo)

These past few weeks, a nation proudly watched history unfold as our brightest athletes outclassed the region's best in a friendly competition of skill and sportsmanship to take the first-ever overall Southeast Asian Games championship title. This achievement was made even more invaluable by the fact that it was earned on home soil. As the official wireless services partner of the 23rd SEA Games, Globe Telecom was honored to take part in this dedicated quest for gold since day one, and proudly salutes the fighting prowess and dedicated spirit of our new sporting heroes.

Our athletes steadfastly pursued their goal of bringing honor to the country. Even in the face of formidable competition, our devoted sportsmen and women dared to dream the impossible. Their perseverance gained public attention and respect. The Filipino nation responded, giving them the encouragement they so desperately needed to sustain their fight for SEA Games fame and glory.

23rd SEA GAMES
Globe
The official wireless partner

Indeed, Filipinos all across the country rallied together and gave their overwhelming support to the athletes, who delivered an impressive 291 medals, 113 of which were gold. "It was a great morale boost to the team; the cheers of the crowd pushed our athletes to do their best," says Benjie Ponce, who coached the karatedo team to three golds and nine bronze medals. "The louder the cheers, the more empowered we became to do our best," adds Gretchen Malalag, the first athlete in SEA Games history to win top karatedo honors in three successive SEA Games.

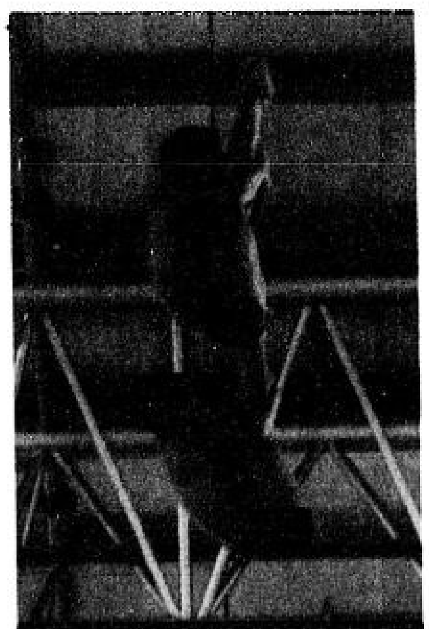
Among those who were especially grateful for the encouragement were first time winners lawn bowler Ronald Lising and Arnel Ferrera, who became the first Southeast Asian to break the 60-meter barrier for the hammer throw event. "This wouldn't be possible without the prayers and support of everyone involved, from the organizing committee to the sponsors, but most of all, the fans," enthused Lising. Added Ferrera, "Our victory is for Filipinos."

The Philippine contingent recently celebrated their groundbreaking win with a triumphant motorcade from the Philsports Arena, Rizal Coliseum and the Fort Bonifacio Army Parade Grounds. The parade culminated in Ayala Avenue in Makati, where they were greeted with congratulatory cheers by an appreciative crowd, led by Philippine Olympic Committee Chairman and Philsoc Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, saying, "Your sacrifices and victories have brought inspiration to an entire nation."

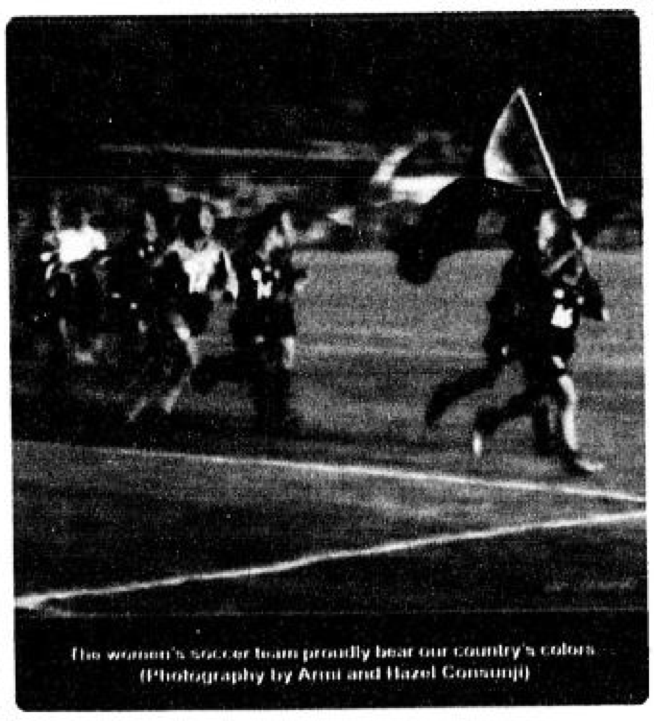
"We owe our triumphant performance in the recently concluded SEA Games to our dedicated athletes, who are living proof of the Filipino's passion for excellence, showing us that the way to success is through hard work and sacrifice," said Globe President and CEO Gerardo C. Ablaza. "Globe has always had faith in the Filipino spirit. These athletes have shown us that with hard work, determination, skill and teamwork, the Pinoy can succeed... *Basta Pinoy, posible!*"

When the post-SEA Games euphoria dies down and victory celebrations come to a close, the Philippine nation will be left with a sense of pride, accomplishment and the prospect of a brighter future. Thanks to the Filipino athletes, our new heroes, the Philippine nation walks proud knowing that no matter what, *"Basta Pinoy...posible!"*

Leaping towards SEA Games glory! (Photography by Rocky de Castro)



Hard work and training paid off for this dynamic diving duo. (Photography by Jewel Dimaano)



The women's soccer team proudly bear our country's colors. (Photography by Armi and Hazel Consunji)

making great things possible
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Carrying the Philippine flag on a victory run. (Photography by Rocky de Castro)

RP's baseball players hit the mark! (Photography by Bek Evaristo)

Top equestrienne Toni Leviste receives a congratulatory hug after riding to showjumping gold. (Photography by Ruel and Au Soriano)

Hopeful youngsters cheer the home team from the sidelines. (Photography by Ruel and Au Soriano)

POWER TO THE PEOPLE
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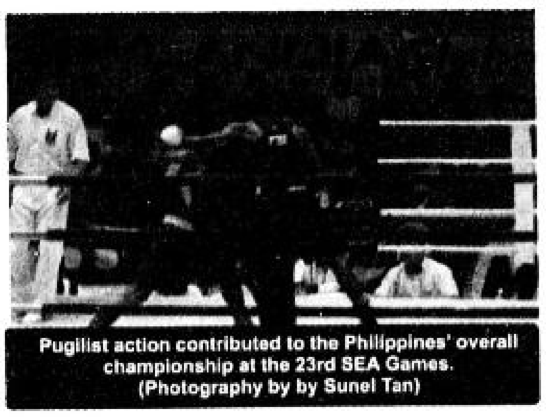
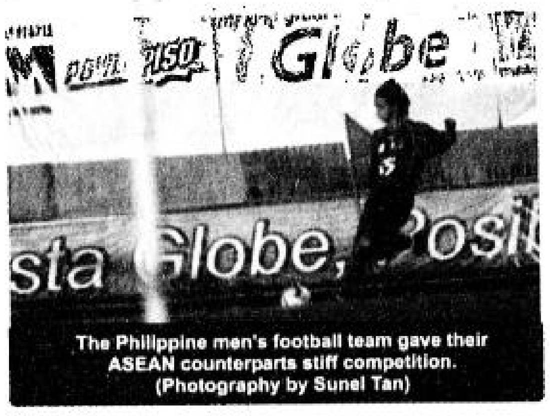
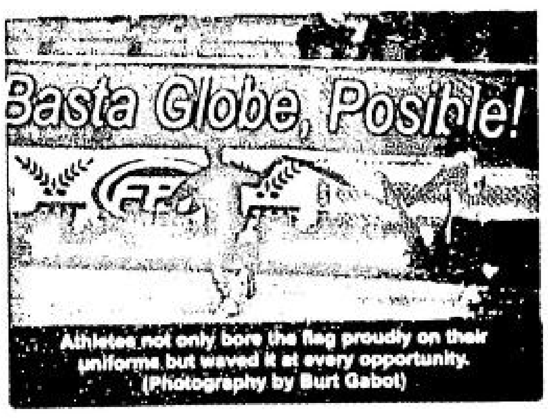
Tennis provided many winning moments for the Philippine team. (Photography by Burt Gabot)



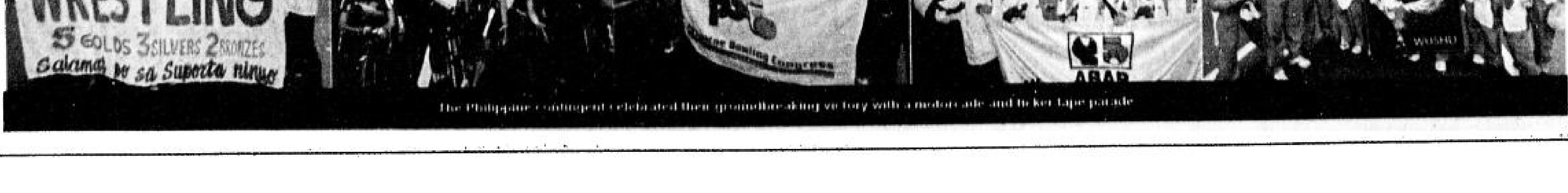
Pugilist action contributed to the Philippines' overall championship at the 23rd SEA Games. (Photography by by Sunel Tan)



The Philippine men's football team gave their ASEAN counterparts stiff competition. (Photography by Sunel Tan)


Basta Globe, Posible!

Athletes not only bore the flag proudly on their uniforms but waved it at every opportunity. (Photography by Burt Gabot)



The Philippine contingent celebrated their groundbreaking victory with a motorcade and ticker tape parade

Editor
Emmie G. Velarde

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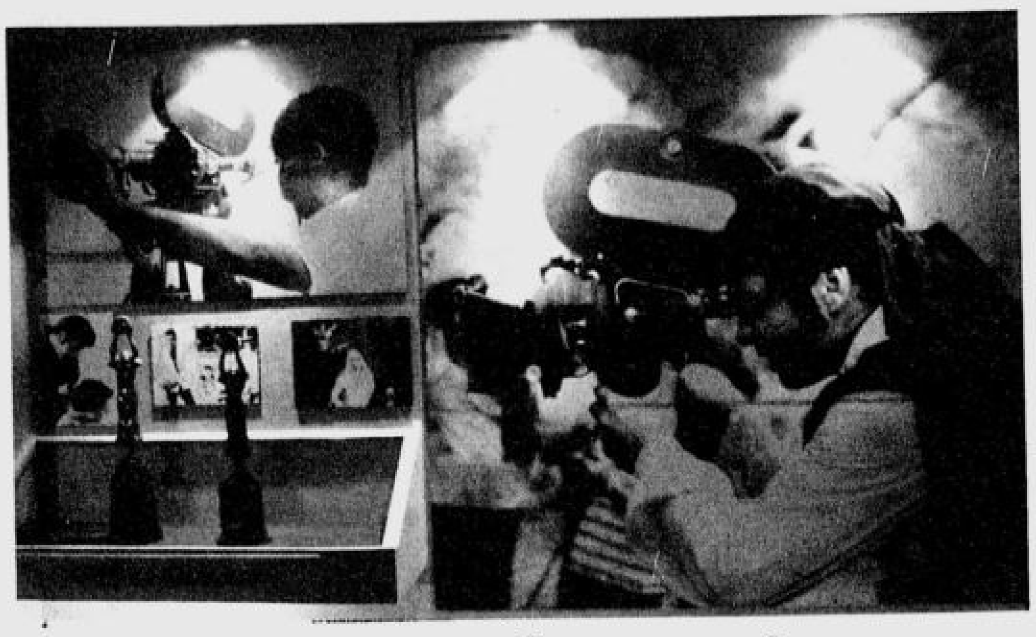

'Da King' has not left the building

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Rodel Rotoni

The FPJ Hall at the Mowelfund museum also honors five National Artists for Film

"IT WAS AS IF HE JUST delivered the speech," said Susan Roces.

Family and friends had gathered on Dec. 13, eve of the first death anniversary of Action King Fernando Poe Jr., for the inauguration of the FPJ Hall at the Pambansang Museo ng Pelikula in the Mowelfund compound in Cubao, Quezon City.

It was at Mowelfund that Poe made his last public appearance on Sept. 24 last year, at the inauguration of the 34-seater Tama Ng Cinema mini theater. Roces couldn't help waxing nostalgic as footage of the speech was shown after the evening mass.

"It's [still] very timely," she told INQUIRER Entertainment.

Indeed, FPJ's words were eerily prescient: "Let us not allow [the film industry] to die. One thing I realized [during the Presidential campaign] is that there is still hope…"

Daughter Mary Grace Llamanzares found the speech "touching."

Lipa Mayor and co-star Vilma Santos recalled that Poe was "loved and respected by everyone." She pointed out, "In the movie industry, friendship goes beyond politics."

Museum curator Nick Deocampo explained, "FPJ, as icon, idol and legend, embodied our collective experience—our yearnings, heroism, dignity and strength as a people."

"The nation has Jose Rizal; the movie industry has FPJ," Sen. Lito Lapid pointed out.

Another special guest, former President Corazon Aquino, approved of the FPJ Hall, saying "We should preserve our history for future generations."

"The first time they told me about the museum," Roces recounted, "it was just a few months after my husband's death. I was not up to it. I couldn't go through the photos and other sou

'DA KING'/ A2-2

31st METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL

(INQUIRER Entertainment is running this MMFF guide to help moviegoers plan their holiday cinema tour. The festival opens on Dec. 25.)

'Exodus: Tales from the Enchanted Kingdom'

Stars Bong Revilla, Ramon Revilla, Jolo Revilla, Bryan Revilla, Ram Revilla, Iya Villena, Benjie Paras, Jay-R, Aubrey Miles, Phoemela Barranda, Paolo Bediones, Long Mejia, BJ Forbes.
Directed by Erik Matti

TOUTED AS THE MOST EXPENSIVE PROduction in the history of local films, "Exodus: Tales from the Enchanted Kingdom" was brought in for P70-million by a consortium of veteran production outfits—the Revillas' Imus Productions, Dondon Monteverde's Reality Entertainment and and the owners of the theme park, Enchanted Kingdom.

Most of the production budget, according to actor-senator Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., went to the creation of computer-generated images (CGI), the employment of Dolby 5.1 surround sound, post-production processing in Thailand, and the costumes.

Revilla portrays the hero Exodus battling to save mankind from evil, in the person of Haring Bagulbol, played by R&B star Jay-R.

The costumes recall those of the players in post-apocalyptic Hollywood movies like "Water World," pre-historic Greek opuses like "Troy," and fantasy-driven "Lord of the Rings 1 & 2."

Prepare for serious swordplay and fight scenes, in which 12 kung fu experts from Hong Kong participate.

An interesting aspect is the coming together of three generations of Revillas—from the patriarch Ramon to son Bong, Bong's half-brother Ram, and sons Bryan and Jolo. —*Nini Valera*

DIRECTOR Erik Matti confers with his cast and crew on the set.

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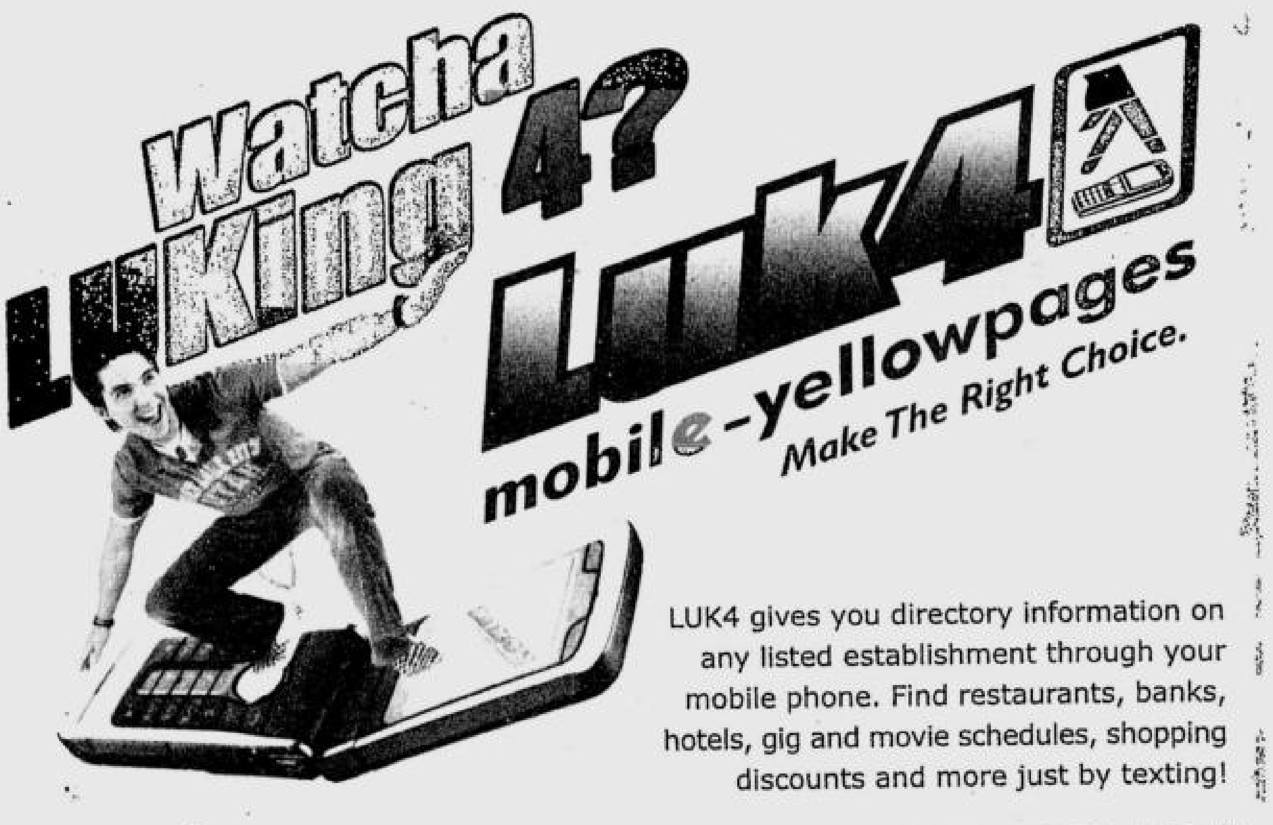
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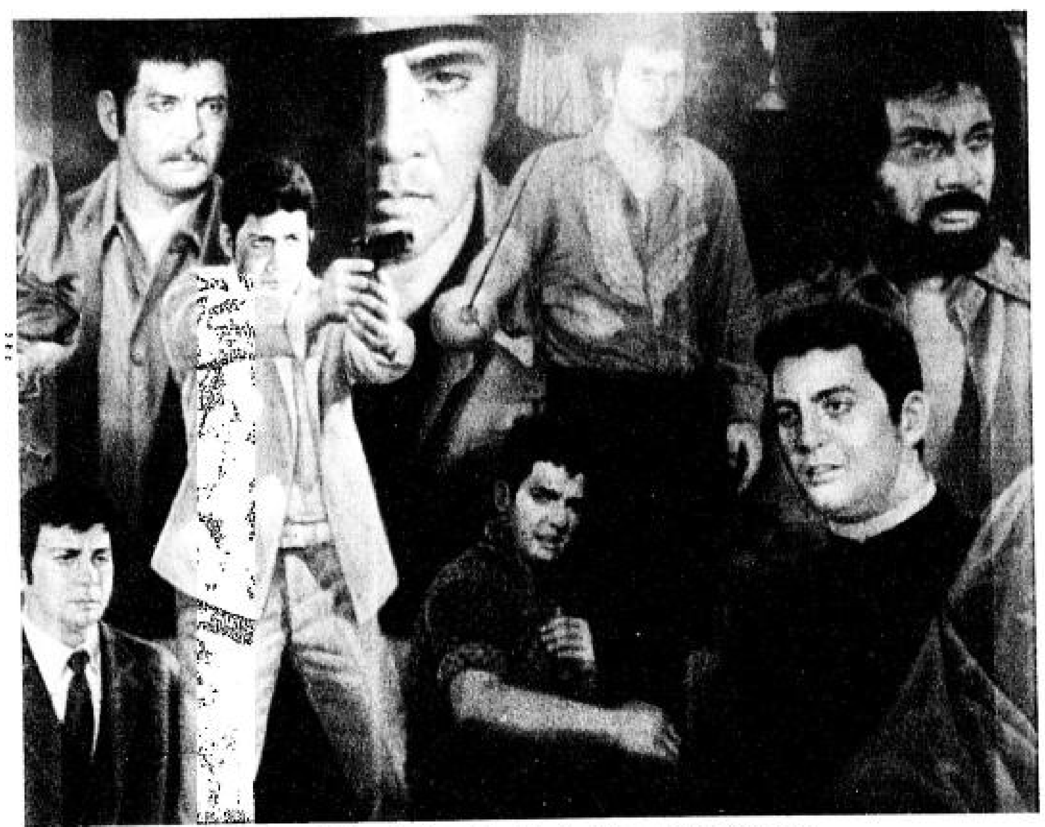

COPY of the Antipolo mural that depicts the King in his many movie roles.

'Da King' hasn't left the building

From page A2-1

venirs."

Boots Anson-Roa, Mowelfund executive director, said, "That was why her daughter's help was invaluable."

Even as she described the undertaking as "a labor of love," Llamanzares jested, "I was just a *dakilang* gofer. The work was made easy because my mom has always loved to collect things."

"I'm a very sentimental person," Roces admitted. "We should value everything." For her, this includes "seemingly insignificant things like a call slip, a movie ticket, a microphone." Her favorites in the exhibit, which she said was "still a work in progress," are her husband's Lifetime Achievement awards.

Llamanzares picked the "Panday" photo in which her father is holding a branding iron, and another one in which he's in a monk costume.

A prized item is the copy of a mural that depicts FPJ in different movie roles. "The original oil painting by layout artist Alberto Nepomuceno is in our Antipolo resthouse," Llamanzares said, adding that her artist-cousin, Jeffrey Sonora, had worked on the copy.

Roces and Llamanzares agreed that young people were the most likely to benefit from the FPJ Hall.

"Since its opening last August, about 5,000 students have visited the Mowelfund museum," Llamanzares said.

Roces hoped the youth "will learn not just about my husband, but also about the other important artists and personalities who contributed to Philippine cinema."

In the FPJ Hall, the Action King is honored alongside National Artists for Film Lamberto Avellana, Gerry de Leon, Lino Brocka, Ishmael Bernal and Eddie Romero.

Anson-Roa expressed the hope that FPJ, as Mowelfund's nominee, would be chosen as National Artist in June 2006.

HIS DAUGHTER'S favorites: Da King as Panday (in the diorama, top) and as a monk (above).

THE SADDLE he used in reel and real life.

TWO WIDOWS: Aquino and Roces view the "Panday" sword (in glass case).

DID YOU KNOW...

'Maxi' fever

THE "MAXI" FEVER has hit the South. Nathan Lopez, 14-year-old star of the hit indie film, "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros," was mobbed by fans in Davao when the movie opened there last week. "I was surprised," said Pidot Villacino, coordinator of the Gay and Lesbian Desk ng City Government. "Normally, Davaoeños would just clap. They used to mob only the likes of Sharon Cuneta and Gary Valenciano."

Lopez was accompanied by co-star JR Valentin.

DJ Dylan

NEW YORK—MUSIC legend Bob Dylan is set to shed his famously taciturn image and step to the other side of the interview studio as DJ on a radio music show.

The 64-year-old singer has signed on to serve as host of a weekly one-hour programme on XM Satellite Radio. *AFP*

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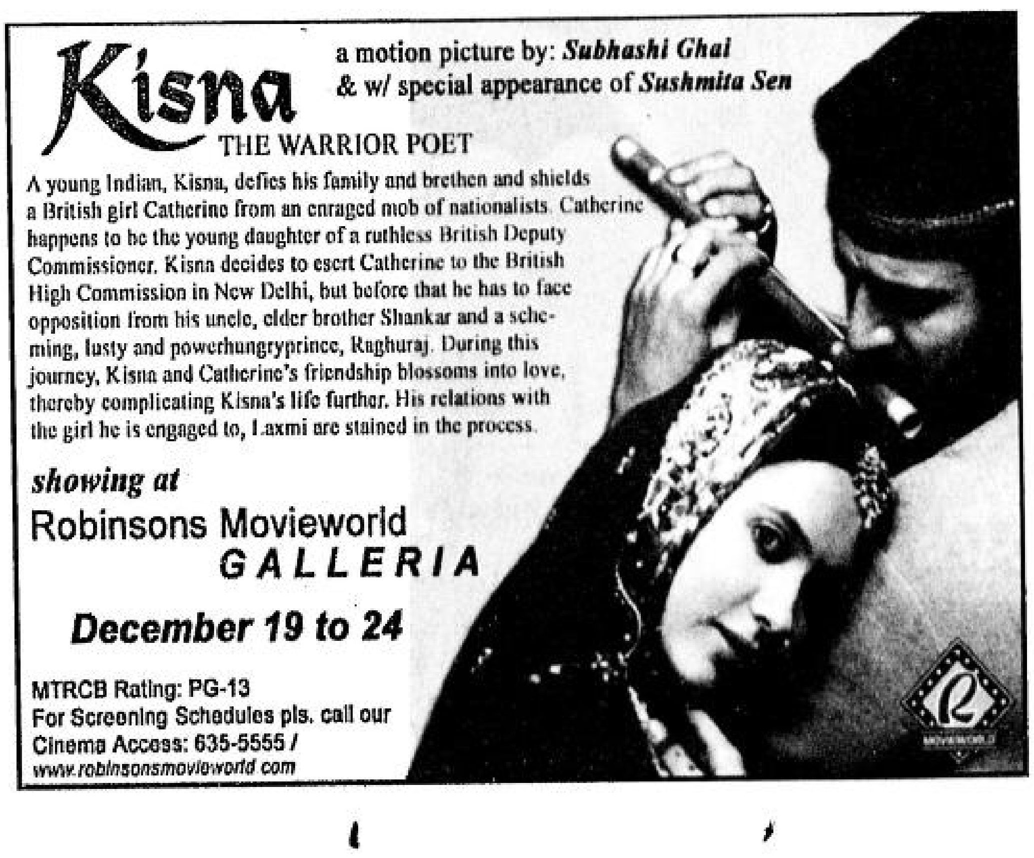
NAOMI WATTS JACK BLACK ADRIEN BRODY
KING KONG
"King Kong" Thomas Kretschmann · Colin Hanks · Jamie Bell and Andy Serkis as Kong · James Newton Howard · Joe Letteri · Richard Taylor · Jamie Selkirk · Grant Major · Andrew Lesnie ACS, ASC · Jan Blenkin · Carolynne Cunningham · Fran Walsh · Peter Jackson · Fran Walsh & Philippa Boyens & Peter Jackson · Peter Jackson
release through Solar Entertainment Corporation



Kisna
THE WARRIOR POET
a motion picture by: *Subhashi Ghai*
& w/ special appearance of *Sushmita Sen*
A young Indian, Kisna, defies his family and brethen and shields a British girl Catherine from an enraged mob of nationalists. Catherine happens to be the young daughter of a ruthless British Deputy Commissioner. Kisna decides to escrt Catherine to the British High Commission in New Delhi, but before that he has to face opposition from his uncle, elder brother Shankar and a scheming, lusty and powerhungryprince, Raghuraj. During this journey, Kisna and Catherine's friendship blossoms into love, thereby complicating Kisna's life further. His relations with the girl he is engaged to, Laxmi are stained in the process.
showing at
Robinsons Movieworld
GALLERIA
December 19 to 24
MTRCB Rating: PG-13
For Screening Schedules pls. call our Cinema Access: 635-5555 /
www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

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GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra Christmas Shows December 23 - 25, 30, 2005 Christmas Fireworks Display December 16 - 18, 23, 25, 30 & 31, 2005; 9PM	Acoustic Christmas Serenade feat. Chedi December 23, 2005 - 6 PM Blims / Automatic Center Exhibit Dec. 19 to 31, 2005	2005 Novellino - Manila Philharmonic Orchestra Concert Tour December 21, 2005

AYALA GREENBELT

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December 23 - 25, 30, 2005
Christmas Fireworks Display
December 23, 25, 30 & 31, 2005; 9PM

GREENBELT 1 Onstage

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES presents
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at REP's GLOBE THEATER
November 11 to December 18, 2005
For inquiries, please call 887-0710

Ayala MUSEUM

Registration for Art Workshops now on-going at Ayala Museum
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Online registration at www.ayalamuseum.org

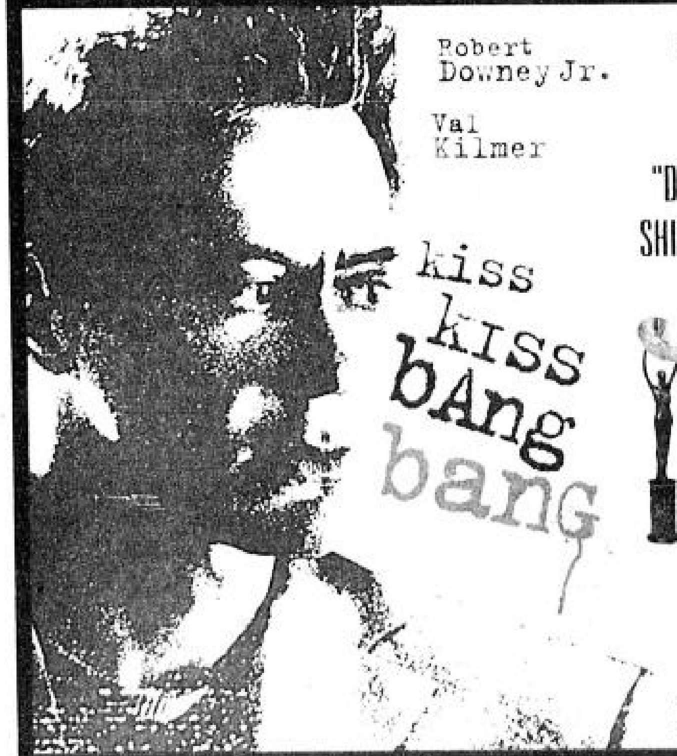
AYALA CINEMAS

THX

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE FOG	2 KINGKONG	3 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS	4 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 JUST LIKE HEAVEN	2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	3 THX KINGKONG GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 KISS KISS BANG BANG	5 CHICKEN LITTLE	6 KINGKONG	7 IN HER SHOES
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS	2 KINGKONG		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX KINGKONG GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX KINGKONG GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 IN HER SHOES GUARANTEED SEATS	4 KISS KISS BANG BANG GUARANTEED SEATS	5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX KINGKONG	2 KINGKONG		
	3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN	4 IN HER SHOES	5 THE FOG	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 KINGKONG	2 KINGKONG	3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN	4 THE FOG



Robert Downey Jr.
Val Kilmer

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- GARY THOMPSON, PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS

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-- MARYANN JOHANSON, FLICK FILOSOPHER

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Best Original Song, "Broken"
10th Annual Satellite Awards
International Press Academy

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Customer Service text hotline:	0917 6095900
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Alabang Town Center -	842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu -	(032) 231 5342 loc 324

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Free Seating Cinemas: P80.00

1. KINGKONG
2. HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3. JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4. KINGKONG
5. THE FOG

EVENTS! EVENTS!

MARKET! MARKET! Bonifacio Global City
The fun is in the finds

Holiday Fireworks Show

November 20, 27
December 4, 11, 18 and 25
7 pm at the Playzone

Market! Market! Simbang Gabi
at the 5th level lobby
Dec. 15 - 23, 6:30 pm

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

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FOR ALL BRANCHES

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA 632-9116

1 KING KONG • THX
11:30 3:10 6:50 10:30

2 KING KONG
12:40 4:20 8:00

3 KING KONG
1:10 4:50 8:30

4 KING KONG
1:40 5:20 9:00

5 KING KONG
11:00 2:40 6:20 10:00

6 THE FAMILY STONE
Sneak Preview

7 BARSAAT
KISNA

8 THE FOG
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

9 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

10 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
Sneak Preview

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 KING KONG
1:50 5:20 8:50

2 THE FAMILY STONE
Sneak Preview

3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

4 KING KONG
11:20 2:50 6:20 9:50

5 KING KONG
11:20 2:50 6:20 9:50

6 KING KONG
12:20 3:50 7:20

7 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
Sneak Preview

METRO EAST 682-8193 - 682-8199

1 THE FAMILY STONE
Sneak Preview

2 KING KONG
10:25 2:10 5:50 9:40

3 KING KONG
2:10 5:55 9:40

4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
12:20 2:30 4:40 6:50 9:00

5 THE FOG
1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05

6 KING KONG
5:15 9:00

7 KING KONG
1:30 5:15 9:00

8 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00

NOVALICHES [illegible]

1 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
2 THE FAMILY STONE Sneak Preview
3 KING KONG
4 THE FOG
5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
6 BEAUTIFUL BOXER Sneak Preview

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER [illegible]

1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 BEAUTIFUL BOXER Sneak Preview
4 THE FAMILY STONE Sneak Preview

CHECK THIS OUT ▶▶

SNEAK PREVIEWS

Fist Of A Man
Heart Of A Woman
Beautiful Boxer

Based on the true story of Thailand's famed transgender kickboxer, Beautiful Boxer is a poignant action drama that punches straight into the heart and mind of a boy who fights like a man so he can become a woman.

Robinson's Movieworld
GALLERIA • ERMITA
PIONEER • METRO EAST

december 19 to 14

MTRCB Rating: PG-13

STA ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 KING KONG
2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 IN HER SHOES
4 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
5 KING KONG

LIPA (043) [illegible] (043) 312-5870

1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET OF FIRE
4 THE FOG

DASMARINAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-2332

1 KING KONG
2 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 KING KONG
4 THE FOG

ANGELES (045) [illegible]

1 KING KONG
2 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 THE FOG
4 KING KONG

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 IN HER SHOES
4 THE FOG
5 THE FAMILY STONE Sneak Preview

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-6270

1 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
2 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
3 THE FOG
4 KING KONG
5 KING KONG
6 KING KONG

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 KING KONG
2 THE FOG
3 KING KONG
4 HARRY POTTER & the GOBLET of FIRE
5 CHICKEN LITTLE
6 THE MYTH

ILOILO (033) 336-8076

1 KING KONG
2 THE FOG
3 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
4 THE MYTH
5 KING KONG

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A tale of two movie premieres

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WE DON'T USUALLY ATTEND MOVIE premieres, because they tend to start very late, but we made an exception for **Marilou Diaz-Abaya's** Advent TV movie, "Maging Akin Muli," last Monday. The invitation said: Cinema 5, Gateway Mall, Cubao—cocktails at 7 p.m., screening at 7:30 p.m.

We got to Gateway on time and headed for Cinema 5. We didn't see **Marilou** but, true enough, cocktails were being served, so we joined the hungry crowd in savoring the good eats.

Minutes later, somebody recognized us and gave us some promo materials. They were quite hefty, so we were impressed. Then, we peeked into the bundle, and saw that the promo materials were for—"King Kong"!

Flustered, we hastily took our leave and looked for the "Maging Akin Muli" premiere. What do you know, it had been moved to Cinema 4! Cocktails were also in progress—so, we had a second repast. Double-burp.

The following day, we got our mail at the office, and belatedly found an invite to the "King Kong" premiere. Well, at least we didn't completely gatecrash the event (or, more specifically, the cocktails)!

We've already written about "Maging Akin Muli," so here's the skinny on "King Kong": Most reviews rave about the film, and praise filmmaker **Peter Jackson** for going back to "the classic basics" in retelling the story of the giant ape for today's viewers.

This has enabled him to provide his version with pristine, seminal visuals of jungles, etc. At the same time, state-of-the-art technology has made it possible for the production to cloak itself with compelling "effects magic" that makes its unique universe come stunningly to life.

Best of all, **Jackson** and his co-writers, **Fran Walsh** and **Philippa Boyens**, have added astute touches in terms of plot and character that have expanded the story's thematic reach and significance.

Jackson's film is set in 1933, and vaudeville actress Ann Darrow (**Naomi Watts**) has found herself jobless. Unwilling to become a burlesque dancer, she falls in with a struggling filmmaker, Carl Denham (**Jack Black**), who is in need of a leading lady for a movie his making on mysterious Skull Island.

There, the film team is unexpectedly thrust into a primitive world peopled by dinosaurs, huge insects—and the giant ape of lore and legend, King Kong.

Why did Jackson choose to film "King Kong" after the triumph that was his "Lord of the Rings" trilogy? Most people don't know it, but "King Kong" has been a cinematic dream of **Jackson's**—since childhood!

He saw the 1930s "King Kong" movie in New Zealand, when he was only eight years old—and it had such a huge impact on him that he decided to become a filmmaker.

Even more strikingly, when he was 12, **Jackson** started to work on his own version of the film that had made such a big impression on him!

His mother "donated" an old stole, which provided the gorilla's fur. The garment was cut apart, used to cover a padded wire-frame body and become a stop-motion Kong figure

The top of the Empire State building was a painted cardboard model. And the New York City skyline was provided by a painted bedsheet.

Sadly, the film was never completed, but the idea continued to preoccupy **Jackson**—until he finally made his film in 2004 and 2005!

Animax Christmas specials

"Escaflowne" at 7 p.m. on Dec. 24. A high school girl is transported to the mystical world of Gaia, where she holds the key to the fate of the land.

"Tokyo Godfathers" at 9 p.m. on Dec. 24 and 8 p.m. on Dec. 25. On a snowy Christmas Eve in Tokyo, three homeless people find an abandoned baby and experience an unlikely miracle.

"Nasu: Summer in Andalusia" at 11 p.m. on Dec. 24, and 7 p.m. on Dec. 25. For Spanish cyclist Pepe, the race in Andalusia is his last hope to win in a major competition. He struggles to accept the marriage of his former girlfriend to his brother while he's trying to focus on winning the race.

'Mourning Girls'

Four women, each claiming to be the wife of a dead man, turn his wake into a celebration in **Gil Portes'** "Mourning Girls," a Metro Filmfest entry which opens on Jan. 1, 2006

Ricky Davao is cast as the dead man, **Glydel Mercado, Chin-Chin Gutierrez, Juliana Palermo** and **Assunta de Rossi** are the "Mourning Girls."

Other cast members include **Cogie Domingo** in a special role, **Janna Victoria, Roy Alvarez,** and **Dexter Doria.**

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FROM ACADEMY AWARD WINNING DIRECTOR PETER JACKSON
KING KONG
IN THEATERS WORLDWIDE DECEMBER 14

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movietime SCHEDULE AND EVENTS

RED CARPET PREMIERE

KUTOB
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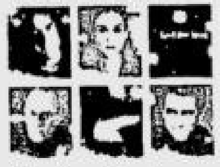
SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
Dec. 20 • Megamall • Cinema 3



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SNEAK PREVIEW
on December 19 and 20 at regular ticket prices
Manila, North Edsa, Megamall, Sta. Mesa, Southmall Bacoor, Fairview, San Lazaro, Sucat, Bicutan, Valenzuela
REGULAR SHOWING ON JANUARY 8 AT SM CINEMAS
thefamilystone

GUARANTEED SEATS

THE PODIUM 633-8976
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG

MEGAMALL
1 KING KONG
11:40FS/12:10MF/03:50
07:00LFS/07:30LMF/10:40END

CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 KING KONG
12:20FS/01:40MF/05:05
08:15LFS/08:30LMF/11:35END
2 KING KONG
11:00FS/11:15MF/02:40/06:05
09:13LFS/09:30LMF/12:35END
3 KING KONG
10:35FS/10:45MF/02:10/05:35
08:43LFS/09:00LMF/12:05END

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG
5 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
6 THE FAMILY STONE
7 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
8 MERRY CHRISTMAS
9 THE FOG
10 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
11 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
12 THE MAN

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 KING KONG
2 THE FOG
3 KING KONG
4 FAMILY STONE
5 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
6 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
7 MERRY CHRISTMAS
8 THE MAN
9 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
10 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 KING KONG
2 FAMILY STONE
3 THE MAN
4 KING KONG

SM VALENZUELA NOW OPEN
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 FAMILY STONE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 FAMILY STONE
2 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
3 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
4 KING KONG
5 HARI NG SABLAY
6 THE FOG
7 KING KONG
8 KING KONG
9 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
10 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
11 CHICKEN LITTLE
12 THE MAN

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 KING KONG
2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG
5 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
6 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
7 THE MAN
8 THE FOG
9 FAMILY STONE
10 BEAUTIFUL BOXER

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 THE MAN
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 FAMILY STONE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 MERRY CHRISTMAS
4 THE MAN
5 THE FOG
6 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
7 KING KONG
8 FAMILY STONE

SM CITY MANILA
1 FAMILY STONE
2 KING KONG
3 THE FOG
4 KING KONG
5 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
6 KING KONG
7 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
8 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
9 KING KONG
10 KING KONG
11 BEAUTIFUL BOXER
12 THE MAN

SM SAN LAZARO
1 FAMILY STONE
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 THE MAN
5 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
6 THE FOG

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 HARI NG SABLAY
5 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
6 KING KONG

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE MAN
4 KING KONG

SM MOLINO NOW OPEN
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE FOG
4 IN HER SHOES

SM CITY BACOOR
1 THE MAN
2 THE FOG
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG
5 KING KONG
6 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
7 FAMILY STONE
8 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

SM CITY MARILAO
1 KING KONG
2 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
3 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
4 KING KONG

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 KING KONG
2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG

SM CITY LUCENA
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 AN UNFINISHED LIFE
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 KING KONG
4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
5 THE FOG
6 THE MYTH
7 KING KONG
8 KING KONG

SM CITY ILOILO
1 JUST LIKE HEAVEN
2 RESERVED
3 KING KONG
4 KING KONG
5 KING KONG
6 THE FOG
7 RESERVED
8 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS

SM CITY DAVAO
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
4 THE FOG
5 KING KONG
6 KING KONG

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 KING KONG
2 KING KONG
3 THE MYTH
4 KING KONG

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
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1 KINGKONG 10:55, 2:45, 6:35, 10:25 PG-13
2 KINGKONG 11:30, 3:20, 7:10, 11:00 PG-13
3 KINGKONG 12:40, 4:30, 8:20 PG-13
4 KINGKONG 1:50, 5:40, 9:30 PG-13

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

KING KONG PG13 1:40,5:10
KING KONG PG13 11:40,3:10,6:40
THE FAMILY STONE PG13 12:30,2:55,5:20
KING KONG PG13 12:20,3:50
KING KONG PG13 2:25,5:55
KING KONG PG13 1:00,4:30

ADVANCE SCREENING – FAMILY STONE ON DEC. 19 & 20 (MONDAY & TUESDAY)

SHANG CINEPLEX
① KING KONG MTRCB. PG-13 12.30, 4.15, 8.00 PM
② KING KONG MTRCB. PG-13 1.30, 5.15, 9.00 PM
③ KING KONG MTRBC.PG-13 2.30, 6.15, 10.00 PM
④ FAMILY STONE MTRCB. PG-13
PREMIERE THEATRE KING KONG
MTRCB PG-13 2 00 5 45 9 30 PM
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CINEMA 1 KING KONG PG13 10:20, 1:55, 5:35, 9:15
CINEMA 2 KING KONG PG13 12:35, 4:15, 7:55
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
PROMENADE GREENHILLS
...a dinstertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 3 FAMILY STONE PG13 10:45,1:00,3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
CINEMA 4 KING KONG PG13 10:50, 2:30, 6:10, 9:50
CINEMA 5 KING KONG PG13 11:25, 3:05, 6:45, 10:25
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.
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January 27, 2005 JED MADELA 9PM
February 3 & 4 NINA&NYOY 9PM
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CINEMA SCHEDULES
Gateway CINEPLEX 10
LEVEL 4, GATEWAY MALL
ONLY P99 ADMISSION
P120 RESERVED SEATS
P150 KING KONG
GLOBE PLATINUM P249 / P299
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

KING KONG
10:50 / 11:25 / 12:00 / 12:35 / 1:50
2:25 / 3:00 / 3:35 / 4:10
5:25 / 6:00 / 6:35 / 7:10
7:45 / 9:00 / 9:35 / 10:10
JUST LIKE HEAVEN
12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 / 7:10 / 9:20

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
KING KONG
1:50 / 5:25 / 9:00
FAMILY STONE
1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30
THE FOG
12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40
...MAXIMO OLIVEROS
12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30

ALI MALL CINEMAS
① KING KONG 12:25 / 4:00 / 7:35
② HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET 12:00 R4 / 2:00 / 5:00 / 8:00
③ IN HER SHOES 12:30 / 3:10 / 5:50 / 8:30
④ BEAUTIFUL BOXER 12:10 / 2:50 / 5:30 / 8:10
⑤ THE MYTH 12:45 / 3:15 / 5:45 / 8:20
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
BARNEY'S MUSICAL CASTLE
December 20 Tue - Showtime 1 pm & 7 pm
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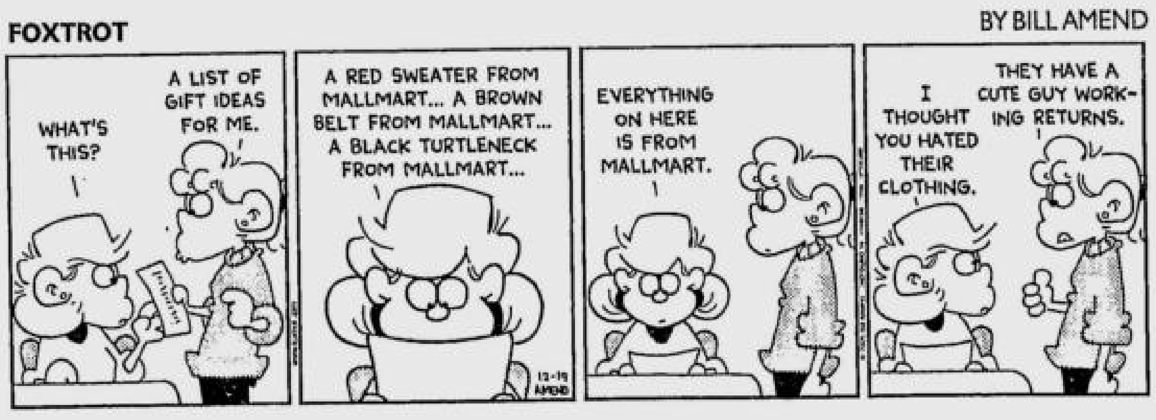
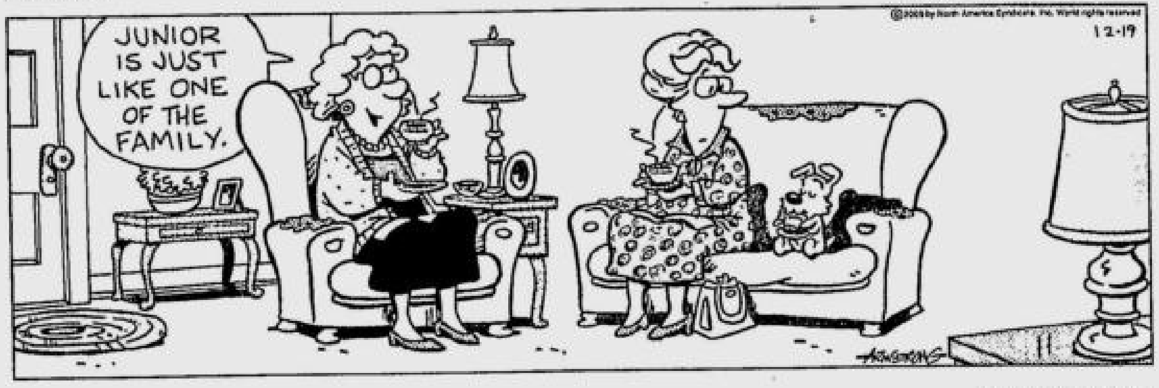
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WHAT'S THIS?
A LIST OF GIFT IDEAS FOR ME.
A RED SWEATER FROM MALLMART... A BROWN BELT FROM MALLMART... A BLACK TURTLENECK FROM MALLMART...
12-19 AMEND
EVERYTHING ON HERE IS FROM MALLMART.
I THOUGHT YOU HATED THEIR CLOTHING.
THEY HAVE A CUTE GUY WORKING RETURNS.

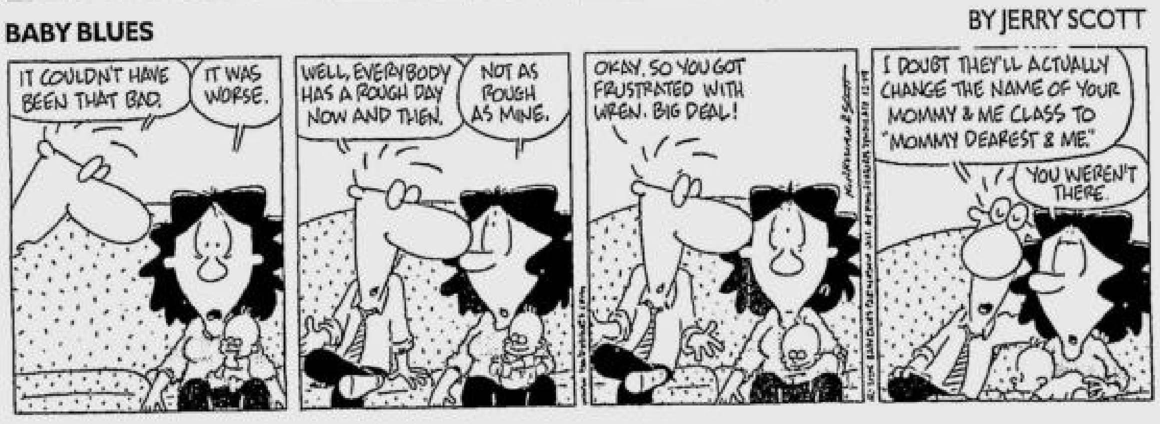
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


12-19
JUNIOR IS JUST LIKE ONE OF THE FAMILY.
ARMSTRONG

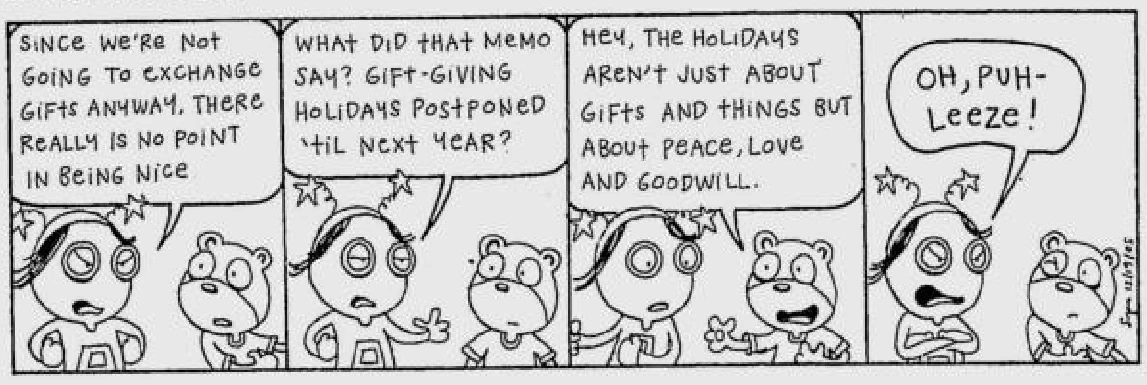
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN THAT BAD.
IT WAS WORSE.
WELL, EVERYBODY HAS A ROUGH DAY NOW AND THEN.
NOT AS ROUGH AS MINE.
OKAY, SO YOU GOT FRUSTRATED WITH WREN. BIG DEAL!
I DOUBT THEY'LL ACTUALLY CHANGE THE NAME OF YOUR MOMMY & ME CLASS TO "MOMMY DEAREST & ME."
YOU WEREN'T THERE.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


SINCE WE'RE NOT GOING TO EXCHANGE GIFTS ANYWAY, THERE REALLY IS NO POINT IN BEING NICE
WHAT DID THAT MEMO SAY? GIFT-GIVING HOLIDAYS POSTPONED 'TIL NEXT YEAR?
HEY, THE HOLIDAYS AREN'T JUST ABOUT GIFTS AND THINGS BUT ABOUT PEACE, LOVE AND GOODWILL.
OH, PUH-LEEZE!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're passionate in a daring way. Others are always impressed with you. (Of course, you're just being yourself.) Nothing daunts you. You're brave, and you have a free spirit. Defeat never crushes you because you believe in yourself. This kind of faith is grace. An important choice must be made in the year ahead. Choose wisely.

Birthdate of: Alyssa Milano, actress; Jennifer Beals, actress; Richard Leakey, paleontologist.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a wonderfully playful day for your sign. You're unusually creative as well. Playful activities with children will delight. Enjoy yourself!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Focus on the home, your family and domestic matters today. Conversations with a parent or a parent figure might be significant. You need time just for yourself to contemplate childhood memories.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a busy day! Short trips, errands and discussions with everyone keep you on the go. Double-check everything. The potential for confusion exists today.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You feel attached to your possessions today. You might even feel attached to your money! If you're shopping, make sure you're not doing some "emotional spending."

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): The Moon is in your sign today. This brings you a little bit of good luck. You have a slight edge over everyone else. Of course, it also makes you more emotional. (No big deal.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): A little solitude will go a long way to restoring your peace of mind today. You need some time alone to pull your act together. Work behind the scenes if you can.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Conversations with friends and groups are significant today. In particular, a female friend might need your advice. Perhaps you are seeking out a confidant?

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You will be noticed today! Therefore, be aware of your appearance, and be aware of what you say to others today, especially bosses, parents and authority figures.

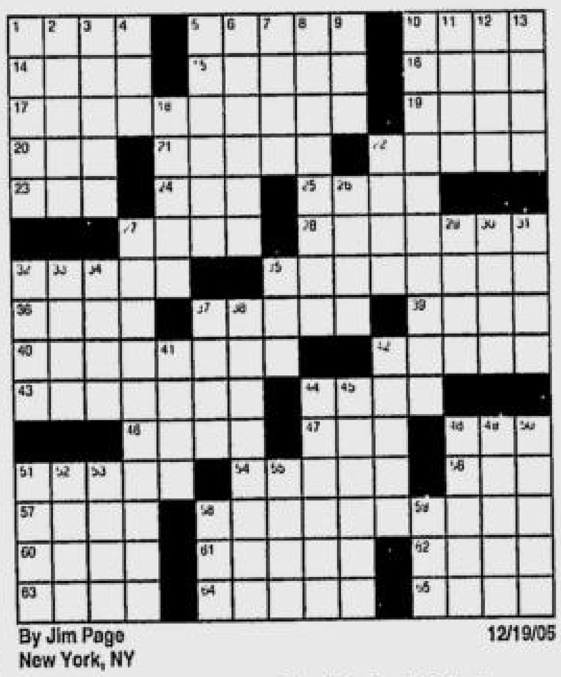
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Try to vary your routine today if you can. You're hungry for adventure; you also want to learn something new. To satisfy these urges you have to do something different!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Something happens today that forces you to meet somebody halfway. You don't agree with this person's values; he or she doesn't agree with yours. Somewhere in the middle is a compromise.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Today's Moon opposes your sign. This pulls your attention out toward other people, especially partners and those who are closest to you. Listen to what they have to say. Think how you can improve your closest relationships.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Be sympathetic with co-workers today. When you get along with co-workers, your job is so much easier! This is important, since you spend so much time at work.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Jim Page
New York, NY

12/19/05

ACROSS
1 Fellini film
5 Stretch of weather
10 Leaning Tower city
14 Ltr. extras
15 Eagles' home
16 River to the Caspian
17 Bobby's billy
19 Colombian city
20 Top pitcher
21 River of Cologne
22 Shooting at clay targets
23 Director Spike
24 Down a hero
25 Post-It message
27 Terrier type
28 Flash
32 Carefree adventures
35 Rendered sexless
36 "Heat of the Moment" group
37 Recurring pains
39 Bell tone
40 Bucolic
42 In need of Pledge
43 Dangerous driver
44 Short distance
46 Musical pulse
47 Resistance measure
48 Trojans' sch.
51 Bloodhound's clue
54 Sun: pref.
56 Polite address
57 Molten flow
58 Shaver's need
60 Done
61 Wading bird
62 Film critic from Tennessee
63 Loom
64 Ratlike, eyeswise
65 Harry's first lady

DOWN
1 Kidney-related
2 Preserved
3 Joplin hit, "Me and Bobby __"
4 Bat wood
5 Glide step
6 Diminutive size
7 __ go braghl
8 Permit holder
9 Albanian coin
10 Prepared for a kiss
11 "Dies __"
12 Closeout, e.g.
13 Stepped down
18 Hard journeys
22 RBI or ERA
26 Artistic work
27 Sidewalk surfer's ride
29 Mr. Kringle
30 Fast period
31 Tense
32 Track circuits
33 Urgent letters
34 Stand up
35 Org. of this puzzle s theme
37 Vicinity
38 Punic Wars city
41 River to the Baltic
42 Disband troops
44 Flew alone
45 Tennis point
48 Accepted practice
49 Opposing teams
50 Native Canadians
51 Feed, as hogs
52 Cover a lot of ground?
53 Pizza cooker
55 Pound of poetry
58 CSA soldier
59 Research center

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

S	E	P	A	R	A	T	E	S		I	M	P	E	L
E	X	U	B	E	R	A	N	T		C	E	A	S	E
R	E	G	I	M	E	N	T	S		H	A	S	T	E
A	S	S	E	N	T	T	O		R	I	N	S	E	D
				A	H	A		H	E	N	D	E	R	S
E	T	E	R	N	A	L		E	D	G	E	D		
D	O	N	O	T		I	F	F	Y		R	A	R	E
N	T	S	B		A	Z	U	R	E		I	L	I	A
A	O	N	E		M	I	N	I		G	N	A	T	S
		A	R	D	E	N		G	A	N	G	W	A	Y
C	A	R	T	I	N	G		E	R	A				
O	G	L	E	R	S		B	R	O	W	B	E	A	T
V	O	I	L	E		P	L	A	U	S	I	B	L	E
E	R	N	E	S		S	E	T	S	A	D	A	T	E
S	A	G	E	T		S	W	E	E	T	E	N	E	D

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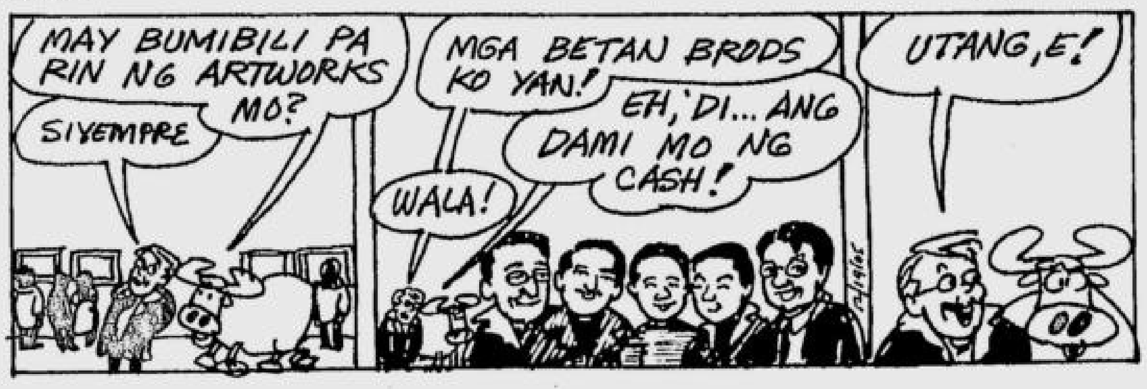
12/19/05

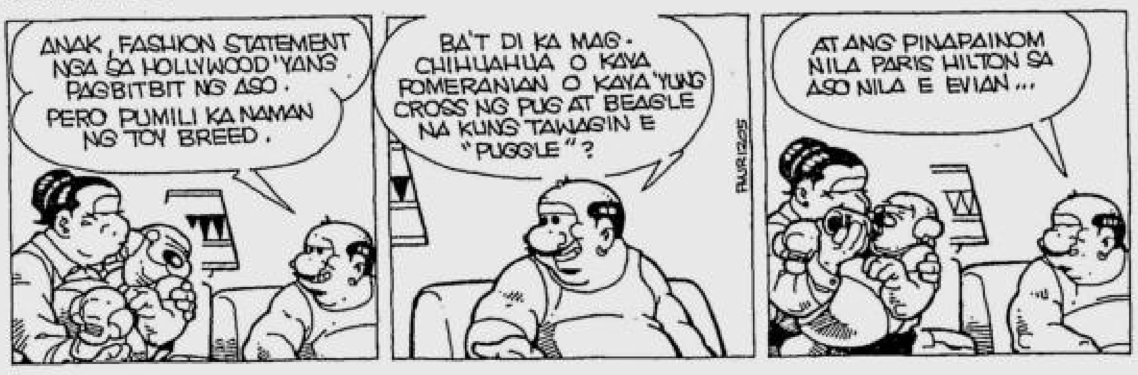
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAY BUMIBILI PA RIN NG ARTWORKS MO?
SIYEMPRE
MGA BETAN BRODS KO YAN!
WALA!
EH, DI... ANG DAMI MO NG CASH!
UTANG, E!

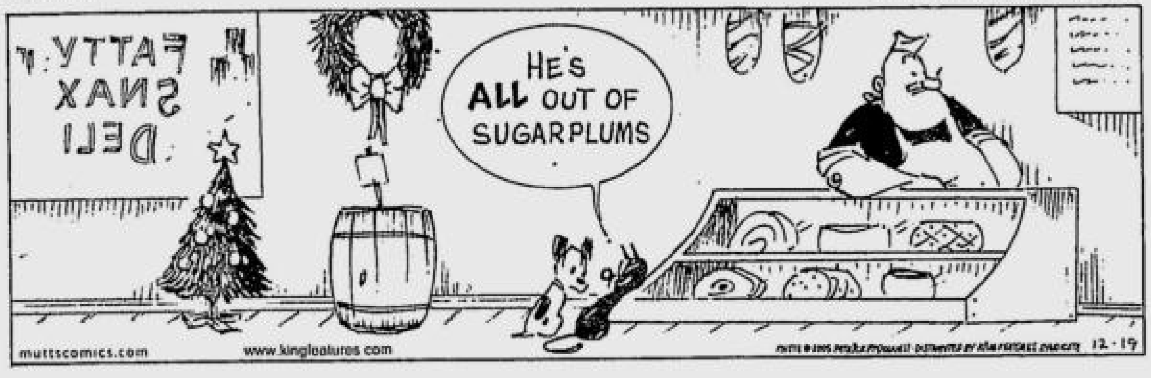
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANAK, FASHION STATEMENT NGA SA HOLLYWOOD 'YANG PAGBITBIT NG ASO. PERO PUMILI KA NAMAN NG TOY BREED.
BA'T DI KA MAG-CHIHUAHUA O KAYA POMERANIAN O KAYA 'YUNG CROSS NG PUG AT BEAGLE NA KUNG TAWAGIN E "PUGGLE"?
AT ANG PINAPAINOM NILA PARIS HILTON SA ASO NILA E EVIAN...

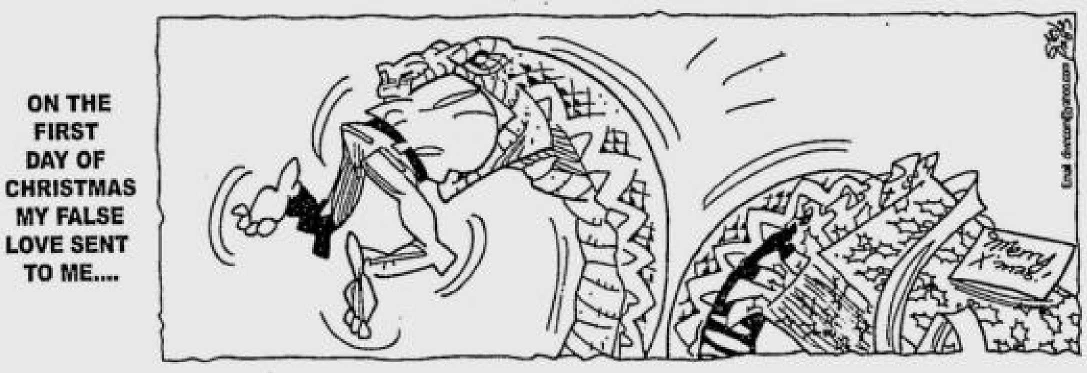
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


FATTY SNAX DELI
HE'S ALL OUT OF SUGARPLUMS
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
12-19

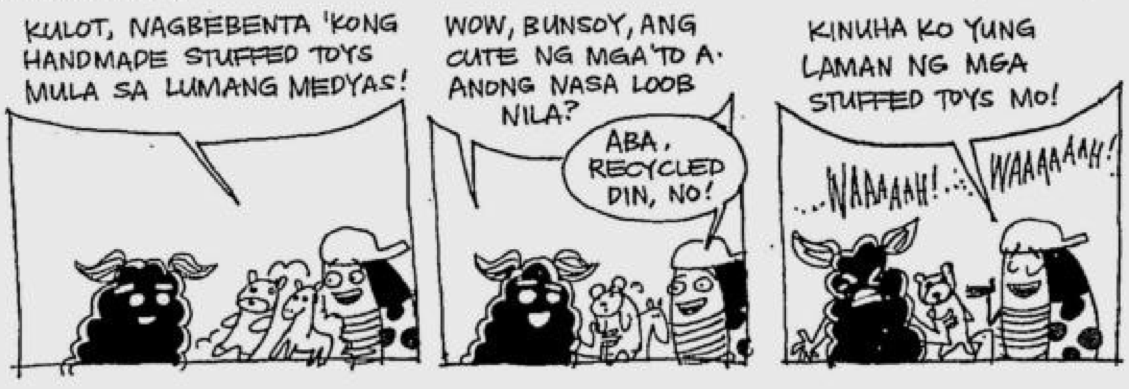
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


ON THE FIRST DAY OF CHRISTMAS MY FALSE LOVE SENT TO ME....
Merry X'mas!

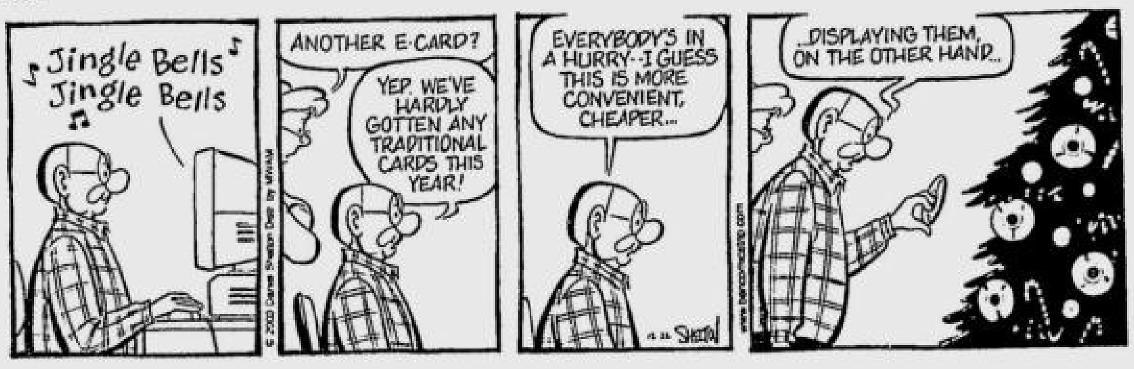
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KULOT, NAGBEBENTA 'KONG HANDMADE STUFFED TOYS MULA SA LUMANG MEDYAS!
WOW, BUNSOY, ANG CUTE NG MGA 'TO A. ANONG NASA LOOB NILA?
ABA, RECYCLED DIN, NO!
KINUHA KO YUNG LAMAN NG MGA STUFFED TOYS MO!
...WAAAAAH!...
WAAAAAAH!

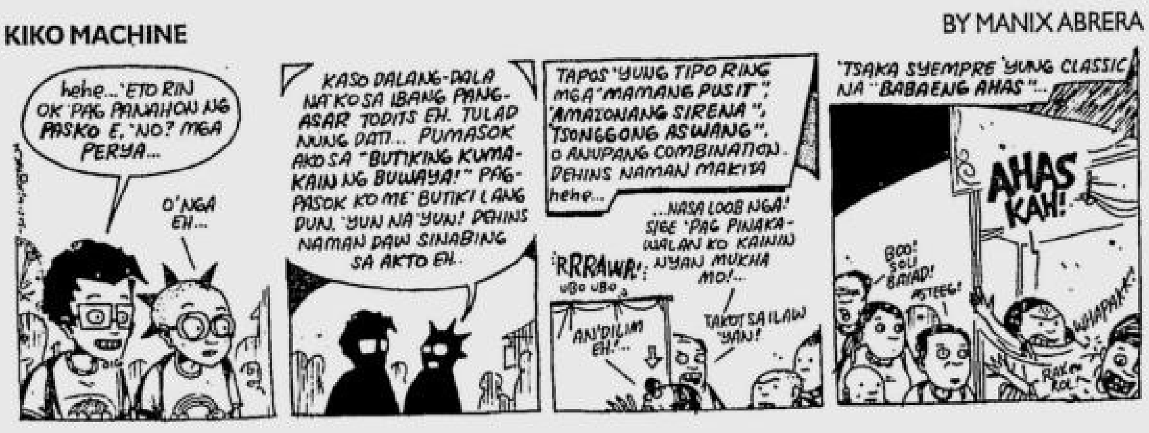
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


Jingle Bells Jingle Bells
ANOTHER E-CARD?
YEP. WE'VE HARDLY GOTTEN ANY TRADITIONAL CARDS THIS YEAR!
EVERYBODY'S IN A HURRY--I GUESS THIS IS MORE CONVENIENT, CHEAPER...
...DISPLAYING THEM, ON THE OTHER HAND...

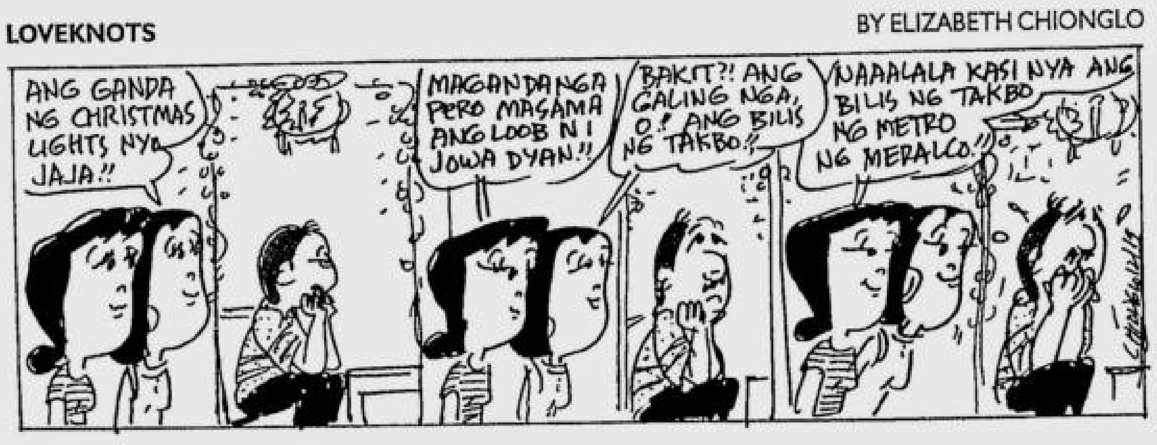
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


hehe... 'ETO RIN OK 'PAG PANAHON NG PASKO E. 'NO? MGA PERYA...
O'NGA EH...
KASO DALANG-DALA NA 'KO SA IBANG PANG-ASAR TODITS EH. TULAD NUNG DATI... PUMASOK AKO SA "BUTIKING KUMAKAIN NG BUWAYA!" PAGPASOK KO ME' BUTIKI LANG DUN. 'YUN NA 'YUN! DEHINS NAMAN DAW SINABING SA AKTO EH.
TAPOS 'YUNG TIPO RING MGA "MAMANG PUSIT", "AMAZONANG SIRENA", "TSONGGONG ASWANG", O ANUPANG COMBINATION. DEHINS NAMAN MAKITA hehe...
RRRAWR!
UBO UBO
AN'DILIM EH!...
...NASA LOOB NGA! SIGE 'PAG PINAKAWALAN KO KAININ NYAN MUKHA MO!...
TAKOT SA ILAW 'YAN!
'TSAKA SYEMPRE 'YUNG CLASSIC NA "BABAENG AHAS"...
AHAS KAH!
BOO! SOLI BAIAD!
ASTEEG!
WAAPAKK!
RAKEN ROL!

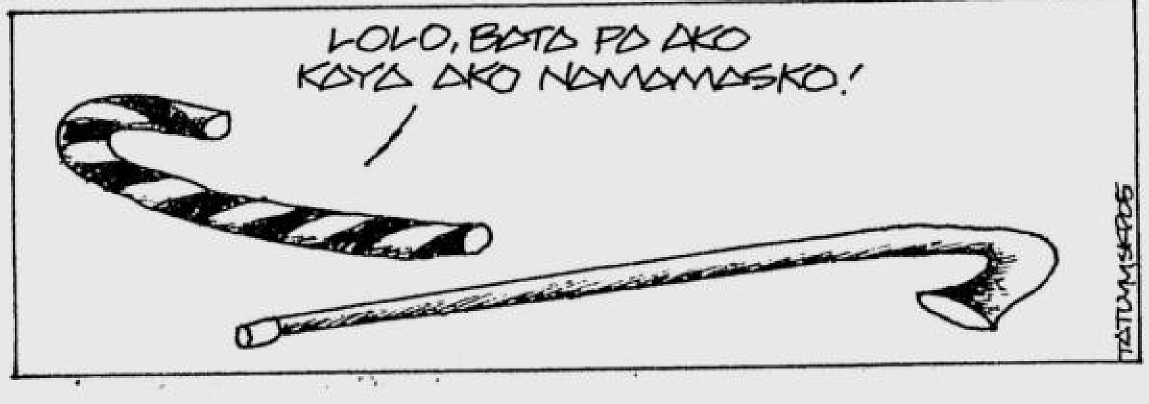
LOVEKNOTS

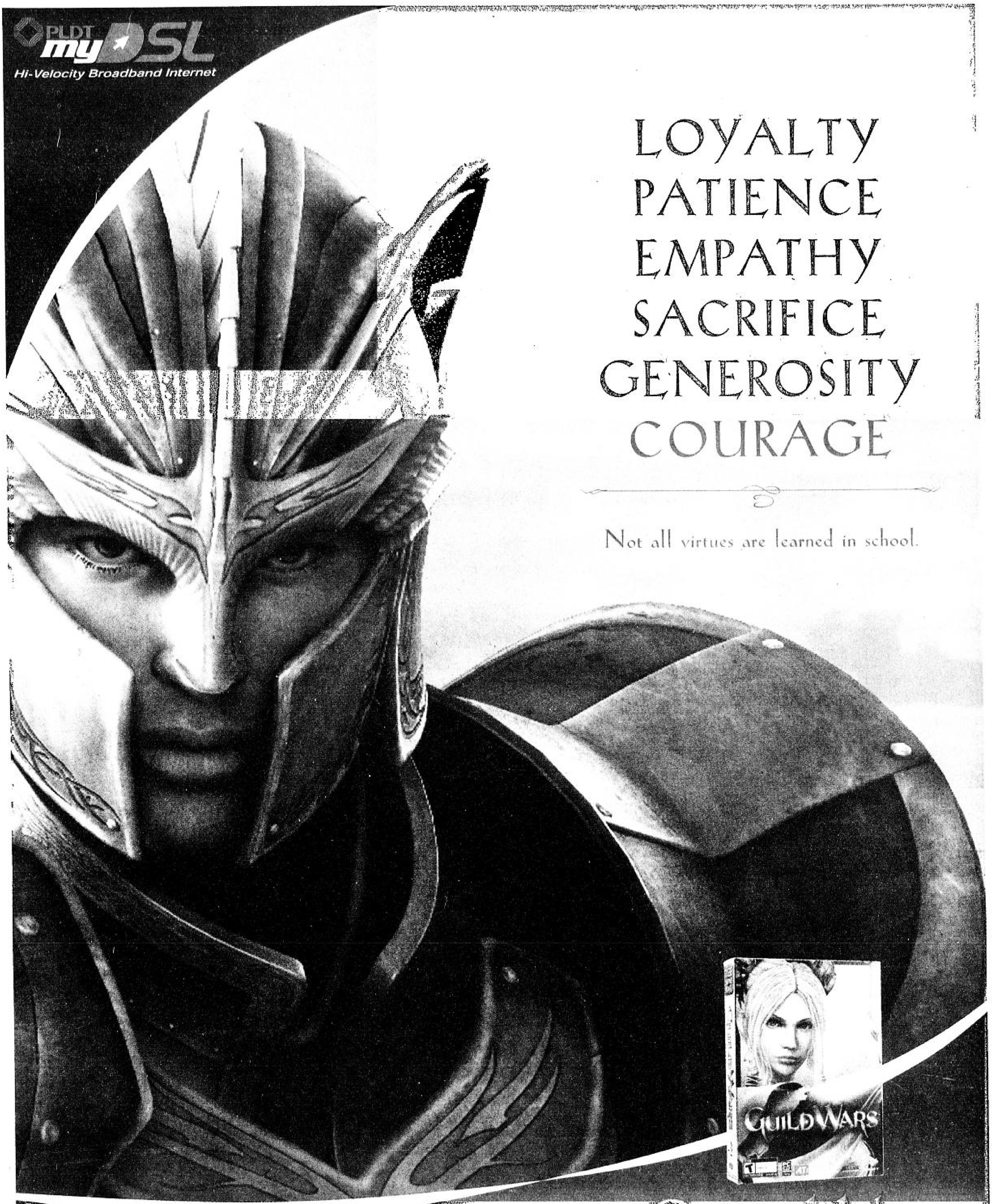
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANG GANDA NG CHRISTMAS LIGHTS NYA JAJA!!
MAGANDA NGA PERO MASAMA ANG LOOB NI JOWA DYAN!!
BAKIT?! ANG GALING NGA, O! ANG BILIS NG TAKBO!!
NAAALALA KASI NYA ANG BILIS NG TAKBO NG METRO NG MERALCO!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


LOLO, BATA PO AKO KAYA AKO NAMAMASKO!
TATUM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GUILD WARS

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Past-due credit card debts hit ₱14.8B

19.4% of ₱76-B total receivables of banks

By Doris C. Dumlao

NEARLY A PESO OUT OF EVERY P5 OF CREDIT CARD EXposure of banks has fallen past due as of end-September this year, but "plastic" billings are on the rise to due to various incentives offered by competing lenders.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported that 19.4 percent of Philippine banks' P76.1 billion in credit card receivables were delinquent, although this past-due ratio was better than the 19.6 percent as of end-June and the 22.5 percent a year ago.

This was much slower than the downtrend in the banking system's past-due auto loans, which eased to 4.8 percent during the same period from 5.1 percent a quarter ago and 6.1 percent a year ago.

On credit cards, the banking system's receivables as of end-September expanded by 4.9 percent from the previous quarter and 21.9 percent from a year ago. This brought up the banking system's credit card exposure as a ratio of total loans to 4.4 percent from 4 percent last quarter and 3.7 percent a year ago.

But given tough competition, credit card issuers are working hard to entice customers to spend, such as mileage, cash back, raffle, perks and balance transfer promotions.

"When there are too many banks offering balance transfer, that's an indication that there are too many players and they are just eating up each other's market," a bank president said.

Compared to a quarter ago, the past-due credit card ratio has slightly eased as the 3.8-percent rise in past-due receivables to P14.8 billion was negated by the expansion in total receivables.

The past-due receivables represented 7.2 percent of the banking system's total non-performing loans as of end-September, higher than the 6.7 percent as of end-June and 4.8 percent a year ago.

Universal and commercial banks accounted for 68.5 percent of the total credit card receivables while their subsidiaries had a 27.9-percent share.

Meanwhile, the banking system's auto loans amounted to P59.9 billion as of end-September, 3.1 percent higher than the previous quarter and 21.2 percent more than the year-ago level.

The proportion of auto loans to the combined loan portfolio of the banking system slightly rose to 3.5 percent from 3.2 percent a quarter ago and 2.9 percent a year ago.

The ratio of past-due auto loans to total loan portfolio was kept at only 0.2 percent for the last three quarters.

Meanwhile, this quarter's auto loans represented 1.5 percent of the banking system's bad loans versus 1.4 percent last quarter and one percent a year ago.

NORTH EDSA TO MONUMENTO

MRT expansion to cost $191M

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

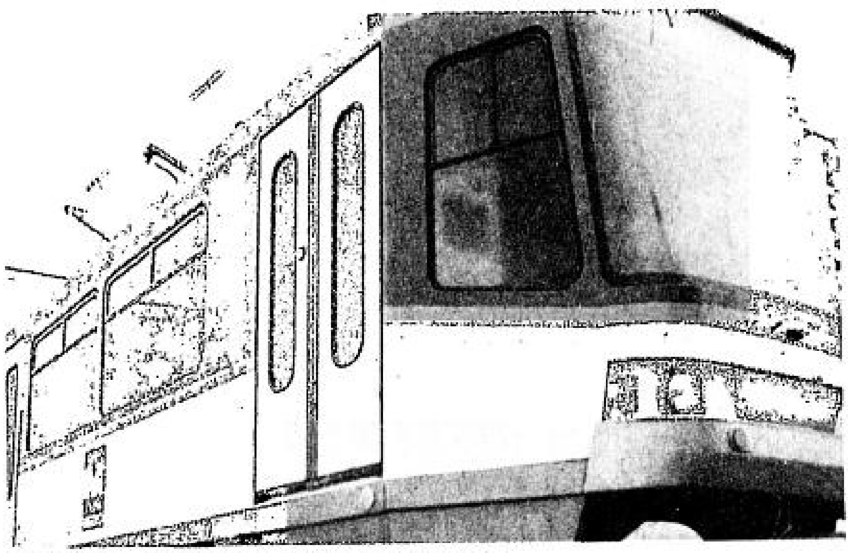
METRO RAIL TRANSIT CORP., A consortium led by Fil-Estate Corp. of the Sobrepeñas, has expressed interest in bidding for the $191-million expansion of the Metro Rail Transit from North Triangle to Monumento.

Fil-Estate chair Robert John Sobrepeña said the government was still drafting the terms of reference for the expansion of MRT III Phase 2, a 5.1-kilometer transit system that will add three new stations from North Triangle station in Quezon City to Monumento. The three stations will cross Roosevelt, Balintawak and Monumento.

The project cost is MRTC's own estimate.

Sobrepeña said the MRTC consortium, which also includes the Ayala Group, Anglophil and United Laboratories, has proposed a project cost of $191 million to the Department of Transportation and Communication. He said this could be be raised from a mix of debt ($153 million) and equity ($38 million).

"We have a project proposal of $191 million (with government) and in an effort to reduce that cost, the government wants the project to be bid out to reduce the cost. We would not object to that or resist that move for so long as it is a publicly held bidding. If it is a negotiated bidding and the costs are above $191 million, then we feel that is where our right should be exercised," Sobrepeña said.


NEW coaches eyed to meet growing ridership

Phase II is seen to generate revenues of roughly $300 million by 2030 combined with Phase I and cut government subsidies by $300 million or roughly P16.8 billion on its 12th year of operation.

Phase II will also allow those living in Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela (Camanava) and Bulacan access to the central business districts in Manila via Edsa once Phase II has been completed.

Separately, Sobrepeña said MRTC was proposing to buy 48 more trains to address growing ridership of the MRT. The MRT system has 73 trains capable of carrying 350,000 passengers a day. It is estimated that the purchase of additional trains would cost another $98 million to $100 million.

Additional trains would increase ridership to 450,000 passengers a day. "Our design capacity is 350,000 a day, and we are beyond capacity," Sobrepeña said.

Fil-Estate currently holds roughly 30 percent in the MRT project, the 17-kilometer light rail system traversing Edsa.

Makati Med president resigns

By Clarissa S. Batino

AILING MAKATI MEDICAL CENTER HAS lost its president, Asian Institute of Management professor Gabino Mendoza, in yet another power play among the influential members of the board of directors.

Mendoza said he had tendered his irrevocable resignation on Dec. 13 after the board of directors decided it wanted more control of management and, consequently, clipped the powers of the president which the owners had appointed in May.

"I agreed to become president of the hospital only when they agreed to give me the full authority of a CEO, which included hiring and firing, promoting and demoting," the AIM professor said in an interview.

Mendoza said in the course of the reforms management had been instituting to stop the hospital from bleeding, he had fired some people. It turned out that those affected had ties to influential board members.

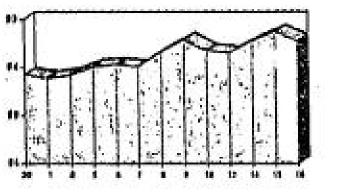
Sources said two doctors, who were board members, and an heir of a doctor who also sat in the board, threw their support behind those affected by the management shakeup.

"As president, I need not be answerable to individual members of the board, but only to the entire board," Mendoza explained. "The condition was, if that would change, I would resign immediately."

MAKATI/ B7

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱53.45 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 16, 2005

¥116.02 = $1

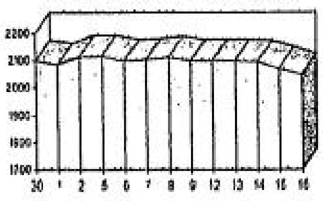
As of 5 p.m., Dec. 16, 2005

GOLD: $497.50-500.00

per ounce Hong Kong, Dec. 16, 2005

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B6)

Stocks seen to rebound

SHARE PRICES ARE SEEN TO BOUNCE back this week, although tamer after the past week's plunge due to political jitters, analysts said.

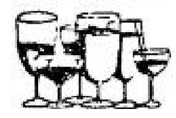
BPI Trade noted in a weekly report that the Bangko Sentral has decided to keep a lid on key interest rates, a move that could curb cost increases for companies.

"The outlook is still bullish as earnings for the fourth quarter are expected to remain positive given the generally strong performance in the third quarter. We expect investors to take advantage of the market correction to accumulate," BPI Trade said.

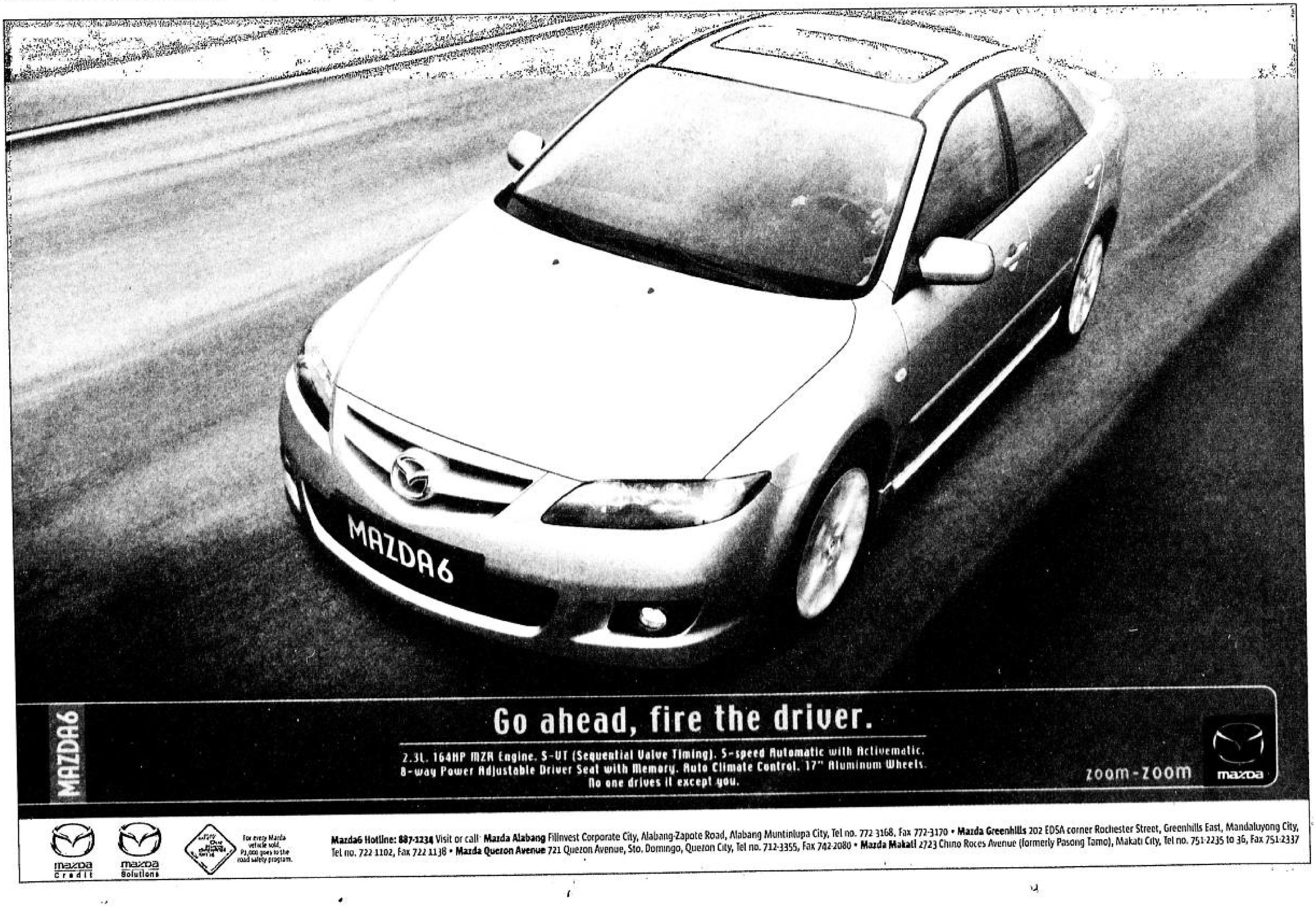
AB Capital Securities noted that renewed political tension rocked the stock market the past week, bringing the Phisix back to a 5-week low after it closed at 2,047.55. Week on week, the index lost 54 points or 2.6 percent with foreign investors bailing out on signs of potential political unrest.

STOCKS/ B3

WHAT'S INSIDE



Lopez pre-IPO bonanza /B3
More investments in eco-friendly vehicles sought /B5



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Third quarter slowdown

No Free Lunch

Cielito F Habito

THE RECENTLY RELEASED THIRD quarter economic performance data (the National Income Accounts) from the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) affirmed what most of us had been feeling all along, i.e., that the economy has continued to slow down.

While the Palace continues to insist that the economy is doing very well—an assessment based primarily on the strengthening peso and stock markets—the official statistics on the real economy speak for themselves, and the picture is not pretty.

Let me highlight some of the bad news so that we could better understand what needs to change in order to achieve better news next year.

Below target

Nobody, not even the government economic managers, believes that the economy can still make it even to the lower end of the 2005 GDP target growth range of 5.3 percent.

With an average growth of 4.6 percent over the first three quarters, we need to grow by 7.4 percent in the fourth quarter to achieve the minimum target.

This is now beyond reach, and it doesn't take much to see and feel why. Ask your favorite shops and you will likely be told that business is significantly slower this year than in the last Christmas season.

The tiangge of development NGOs held at the Glorietta in Makati last week in observance of Social Development Week was indicative. I'm told that last year, the bazaar grossed an average of P400,000 per day. This time, they managed only half of that.

Remittances from abroad may be growing by double digits (19.7 percent from last year, according to the third quarter report), but it seems the money isn't being spent as readily by the recipients here at home.

Third quarter growth in wholesale and retail trade was down to 4.9 percent from 7.8 percent a year ago.

Mall shopkeepers will tell you that people are mostly looking, but not buying.

I no longer see the kilometric queues at the cash registers of SM that had become a common ordeal in past Christmas seasons.

People on a tight budget are opting instead for the tiangges that have sprouted all around, and yes, that infamous 168 Mall in Divisoria that people have come to either love or love to hate.

Production side woes

Within the production sectors, the prominent losers (i.e., those who did not only suffer slower growth, but actual drop in production) included palay, poultry and forestry.

Non-metallic mining and quarrying took a deep plunge (-42 percent), mirroring the drop in both public and private construction.

In manufacturing, the losers were garments and footwear, non-electrical machinery, wood and cork products (with a whopping -45.9 percent plunge), and beverages.

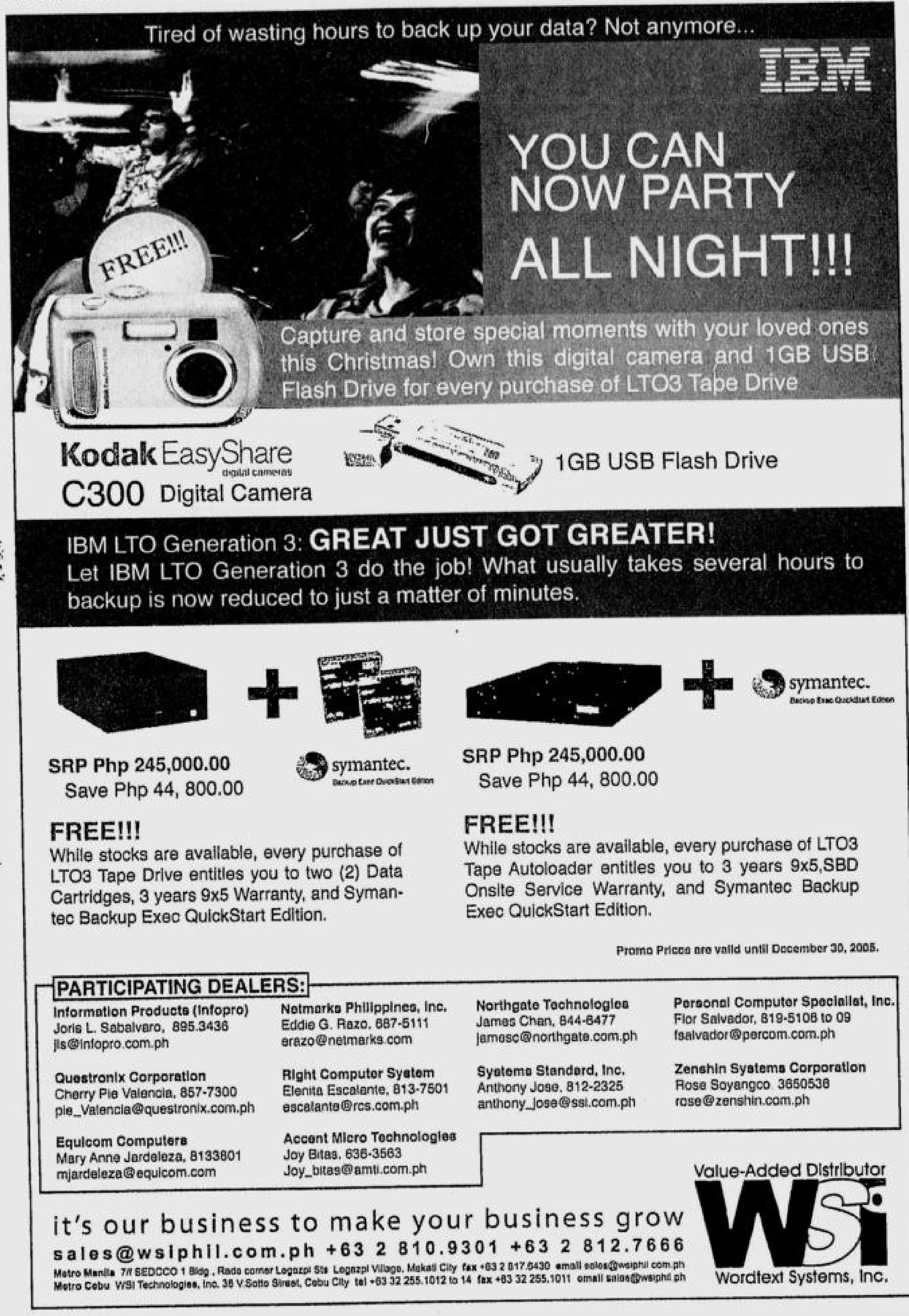
The last is interesting as beer sales have always been considered a good barometer of the economy's health.

The services sector, while still the leading source of growth in the economy, has also weakened for a third quarter in a row.

Land and water transport are down, while air transport slowed down dramatically. Remarkably, the telecommunications sector has gone down to single digit growth (9.7 percent) after consistent brisk double-digit growth over the past years.

It appears that economic hardship is taking its toll even on people's cellular phone usage. I remember the anecdotes we had been hearing of young people giving up their

NO FREE LUNCH/ B3



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Lopez pre-IPO bonanza

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERING of the First Generation Holdings Corp. is still two months away, but patriarch Oscar Lopez is already on a profit-taking mode from its vigorous parent company.

Earlier this month, Lopez sold all 228,420 shares of First Philippine Holdings he obtained under the employee stock option plan as soon as the shares had been released.

The listed First Philippine owns about 89 percent of First Gen, with both companies being chaired by Lopez. On Dec. 7, the 75-year-old patriarch received 90,030 First Philippine shares for P24.07 each. On the same day, he promptly sold 70,030 of these shares for P49 each.

The following day, he received a bigger tranche of 138,390 shares for only P16.79 each, which he promptly disposed of, including the 20,000 shares left the day earlier, at P48.50 each.

After taxes and commission, the billionaire cleared about P6.6 million in two days.

The patriarch still has over 4.9 million First Philippine shares in his name, of which over 1.27 million were obtained only in October for P11.28/share, also under the company's ESOP.

As of Friday's closing of P47.50, that pile is equivalent to over P60 million in stored, personal cash.

Ortigas gets green, finally

THE ORTIGAS business district finally joins the green bandwagon when it inaugurates today a pocket park behind the Strata 100 building in the tri-city district.

A 1,590-square-meter "sitting park" with a water wall to "momentarily transport people ... from the urban jungle that is Ortigas Center" (as an Ortigas briefing paper so aptly puts it) will be opened to the public today by the publicity-shy Ortigases as they celebrate the 75th year of the Ortigas and Co. partnership.

Actually, the 108-hectare Ortigas Center already has the required percentage for the open spaces, such as those in front of the Tektite Towers and near the University of Asia and the Pacific, but they have served more as daytime repository for vehicles, pay parking lots, rather than parks.

After successfully refurbishing the nearby Greenhills shopping complex in a span of a few years, Ortigas' new professional management team led by ex-Ayala executive Rex Drilon also plans to launch a townhouse project in Valle Verde to mark the reentry of the limited partnership into the housing business.

Going back to the green theme, a petting zoo is also in the works within the 18.5-hectare Frontera Verde, where the first phase Tiendesitas cluster of native shops is already making waves among the upper-crust shopping crowd.

Money-go-round

- "THE PARTNERSHIP" claim being sought by Aurelio K. Litonjua Jr. against the businesses of his brother Eduardo K. Litonjua Sr. and Robert T. Yang has been thrown out by the Supreme Court.

The high court's Third Division said Aurelio presented a spurious, unsigned document to claim a 10-percent stake in the Luneta-Odeon-Avenue-ACT theater chains and other related businesses of Eduardo and his partner Bobby Yang.

- SM is building a hypermarket in Carmen, Rosales, on a 4.8-hectare property acquired from local businessman Antonio Nucom.

Heard through the grapevine

CONDIMENTS king Jose "Butch" Campos Jr. has vowed to transform his newly acquired Del Monte Pacific into a food-juice-and-condiment empire that would eclipse the Unilab Group now controlled and managed by his "ate," the low-profile Joy Campos-Hess.

The second of three children and, until March, Unilab chair and CEO, Butch hopes to achieve his mission within the lifespan of their ailing father, Jose Yao Campos.

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No Free Lunch

From page B2

lunch allowance just to be able to buy more "load." Nowadays, it seems that even that is being curtailed, which can only mean that the situation must be really bad.

Few winners

It's not all bad news, though. Some of the winners in agriculture are coconut, banana and livestock, all posting better growth than in the previous year. The same was true with pineapple, mango and cassava, among other minor crops.

A few bright spots in manufacturing managed better performance this year compared to 2004. The problem is that, unlike the job-rich industry losers above, these good performers were mostly industries that don't create all that many jobs.

Most notable are petroleum and coal products, chemicals and chemical products, textiles, and metal industries, all of which are capital-intensive enterprises.

In services, it's the money people who are making money: the finance industry is looking up, with its 15.6-percent growth rate. This is coming mainly from the banks, while insurance continues to plunge due to pre-need industry woes.

Slower spending

Production has either been slowing down or declining because people are not buying as much.

The lion's share of the spending comes from personal consumption expenditures (70 percent of total), which has moderated to 4.8 percent from 5.5 percent last year.

Both government consumption spending and investment expenditures have dropped: the first because of the fiscal bind government has gotten itself in, and the second due to lingering uncertainty on the political front—also a self-inflicted difficulty.

Meanwhile, sales of our products abroad have also dramatically slowed down from last year's double-digit growth (17.1 percent) to a meager 3.9 percent growth this year.

Apart from weaker demand overseas, the strengthening of the peso isn't helping our export prospects any. Thus, I can't be too jubilant about the way the exchange rate is moving.

All in all, there's more bad news than good news from the third quarter economic data. Problem is, even the supposedly good news isn't entirely good news either.

Here's hoping that we all manage to have a Merry Christmas, nonetheless.

(Comments are welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu)

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Stocks ...

From page B1

Investors also ignored a stronger peso and the BSP's move to leave local rates unchanged on good economic data.

Ramos administration defense chief Fortunato Abat last week declared himself as the leader of a transitional government, but failed to lure mass action.

The event negated several positive economic news that came out, AB Capital Securities said, which included the peso strengthening to 53.16 against the dollar on strong remittances from overseas Filipino workers and low corporate demand.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

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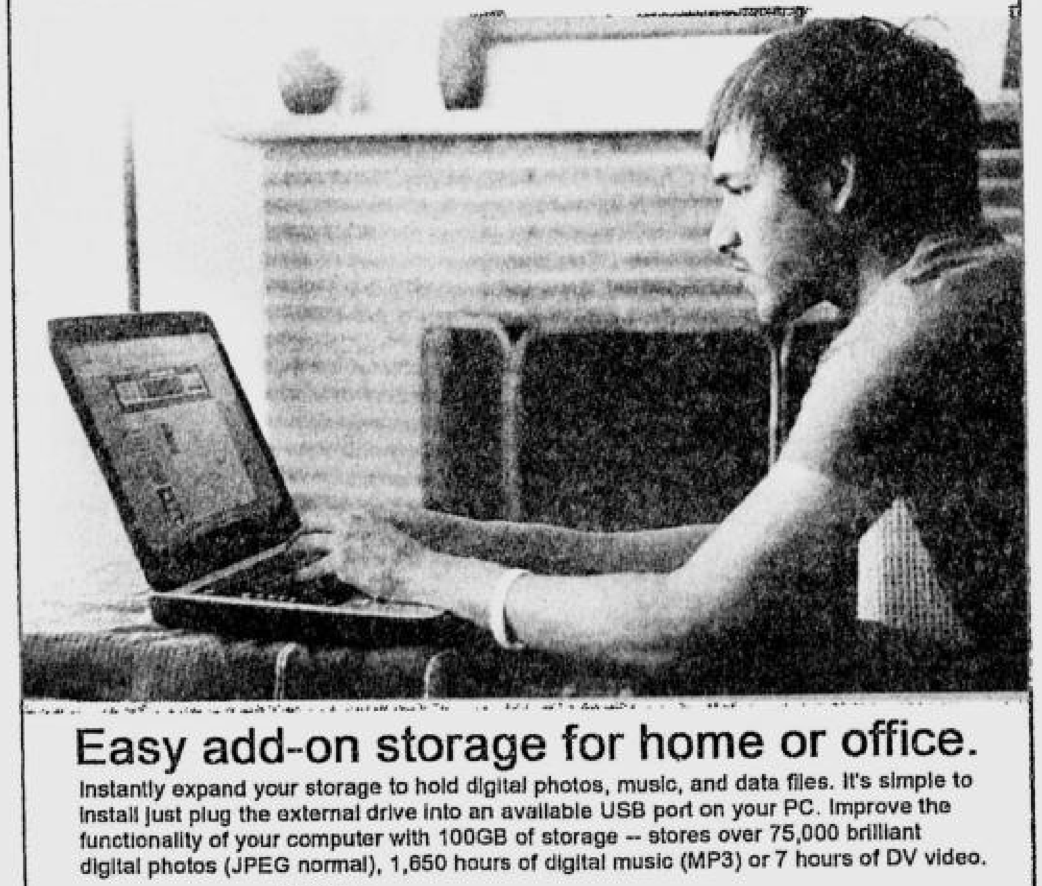
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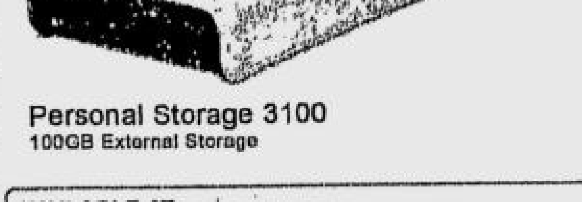
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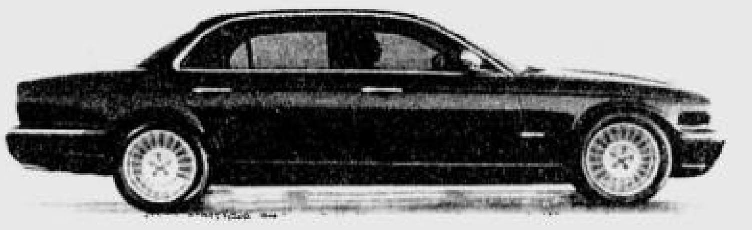
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Christmas shopping online? Think before you click

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

WHILE IT'S BECOME MORE CONVENIENT for some people to shop online instead of lining up in malls, security experts warn that online shoppers should think before they click online advertisements or unsolicited e-mail that might appear to offer knock-off prices.

A poll conducted by anti-virus firm Sophos shows that online shoppers are more cautious about shopping online, but the company reiterated that one should be extra careful this holiday season because spammers and fraudsters are working overtime to trick people to giving away personal information and buying fake and fraudulent items.

Here are a few tips offered by Sophos for consumers in case they decide to shop online:

1. Beware of people selling merchandise via unsolicited e-mail or spam. Sophos expects spam to increase 300 percent during the holiday season.

2. Don't be fooled by holiday e-mail. Sophos warned that virus and Trojan horse writers always use holiday themed e-cards and other tricks to attack unsuspecting users. The prevalent Zafi-D worm is now spreading as an attachment in an e-mail message wishing "Happy Hollydays."

3. Don't get victimized by phishing scams. Phishing involves identity theft. The anti-virus expert said "phishing" scams are also rampant during the shopping season. As people buy online, they should be careful about giving out confidential information.

4. Think before you click. The experts warned people not to click on links contained inside HTML e-mail, as they may direct them to an entirely different website set up by the hackers.

5. Don't try; don't buy; don't reply. Sophos said that no matter how tempting or authentic an e-mail may seem, delete it. If an offer seems too good to be true, it probably is.

6. Never give out personally identifiable information, such as social security number, name and address or phone number, bank account, credit card number, e-mail, etc., to just anyone online.

7. Update your anti-virus software, and install an anti-spam of firewall to protect yourself from virus attacks.

Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant at Sophos, said that frantic buyers, in an effort to save time and money by shopping online, are often inviting criminals into their computers, opening up the possibility of credit card fraud and identity theft.

"People want to buy online because of the variety of goods on offer and the convenience of surfing to an online store rather than fitting in a real-life visit during a busy day," continued Cluley. "However, consumers also worry about exposing themselves to the very real threat of hacker attack."

Informatics student is RP's fastest PC builder

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

INFORMATICS STUDENT FRANCIS MICHAEL Anthony Lloren can assemble a desktop computer in seven minutes and 22.83 seconds. That feat landed him the title of fastest geek or PC builder in a recent national competition.

Besting other students from other local universities, Lloren said that he joined the competition mainly to represent his school.

Lloren defeated other representatives from eight colleges, including University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, Mapua, Adamson, AMA, University of Santo Tomas, and Don Bosco in a PC-building competition in August.

"Trip, trip lang," Lloren told Infotech, indicating that he did it all in the name of fun.

He eventually was ranked third in the regional championship held recently at the World Cyber Games (WCG) in Suntec City, Singapore, where he competed against representatives from Singapore and Indonesia.

Now a senior at Informatics, Lloren is taking up both Computer Science and Information Technology courses.

In the Philippine finals, which was hosted by PC Magazine, he assembled a multimedia PC, complete with accessories. Each contestant had to make sure the PC would be fully functional once they were done assembling it.

Apart from his interest in computers, Lloren is a member of the Philippine Ice Hockey Team since 2003. He said he spends Friday nights practising with his teammates. He has in fact participated in the International Amateur Ice Hockey Competition for two consecutive years.

Lloren also spends time helping manage his grandmother's Internet café, selling computer parts online, and working as an audio-visual technician for events. He explained that he began to work part-time when his father died two years ago, helping his mother augment the family income.

OMB chair apologizes to Senate, appeals P1 budget decision

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

OPTICAL MEDIA BOARD (OMB) CHAIRMAN Edu Manzano has apologized to the Senate for his absence from the agency's 2006 budget hearing last week.

Manzano has sent a letter of apology to Senate President Franklin Drilon, who decided to give the anti-piracy agency a one-peso budget after the OMB chairman failed to show up for the third time, OMB executive director Marivic Benedicto told Infotech.

Benedicto said Manzano has asked the Senate for reconsideration and suggested that the hearing be reset to another date.

Benedicto also clarified that she was in the vicinity of the Senate at the time of budget hearing, but failed to appear before the Senate as she was not informed immediately of the need to attend the hearing.

"I did not say that I was not interested in joining the hearing. I told our people that I did not want to represent the OMB alone, or without the chairman," she added.

Benedicto said that the OMB is requesting for a budget of around P95 million for 2006.

"The industry, which is also already having problems due to piracy, will suffer if our budget is not approved," the OMB official said.

OMB board director John Lesaca hopes that the Senate will reconsider its decision.

"I think both of the parties did not want this to happen. I hope the OMB chairman and the Senate President will come to terms and open the channels for communication," Lesaca told Infotech in a separate interview.

Lesaca said the OMB is going through restructuring and reorganization since its mandate was changed following the passage of a law creating the agency. This anti-piracy agency was formerly known as the Videogram Regulatory Board.

"Our problem right now is how to institutionalize the new agency properly. This has not happened yet," he said.

Infotech reported previously that Drilon said the continued non-appearance for the proposed P26.6-million budget showed that the OMB is "not interested in their budget."

"This is the third time that the hearing for the budget of the OMB was set. The first time, the head, Mr. Manzano, was abroad. The second time, another reason was given and the third time today suddenly Mr. Manzano is sick," reports quoted Drilon.

The OMB intelligence agent Dante Malbas, who "did not understand the budget of the OMB," represented the anti-piracy agency during Wednesday's hearing.

"We consider this behavior as inappropriate to say the least. Therefore we have recommended a one-peso budget to deliver the message that they should give more attention to the budget deliberations as [these are] is the operations that they would like to undertake next year. If they themselves are not interested in the budget, why should we be interested? Therefore a one-peso budget will be recommended to the plenary," Drilon had said.

3B mobile subscribers in 2008

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

THE MOBILE PHONE INDUSTRY IS EXPECTING to get 3 billion mobile subscribers by 2008, not 2010 as earlier forecast, according to mobile phone vendor Nokia.

"We've changed our forecast due to the faster growth in emerging markets," said Parikshit Bhasin, country general manager of Nokia Philippines.

Statistics from Informa Telecoms Media show there were about 1.56 billion GSM-based mobile phone subscribers in the world in the first nine months of 2005, said the Global Mobile Suppliers Association (GSA).

Growth is expected to come from Africa, some parts of Europe, Russia, India and China, the GSA said.

Nokia expects the total number of mobile handsets sold worldwide to reach 780 million by end of 2005, a slight improvement from the second quarter forecast of 760 million.

Nokia for its part said that it had sold more than 66 million mobile phones worldwide at the end of third quarter this year. This was amid earlier speculations that global demand was slowing down.

Bhasin said that Nokia had an 18-percent overall sales growth and 29 percent profit gain during the said period. He did not provide specific details for the Philippine subsidiary.

Bhasin said Nokia now owns 33 percent of the global market share for GSM-based mobile handsets.

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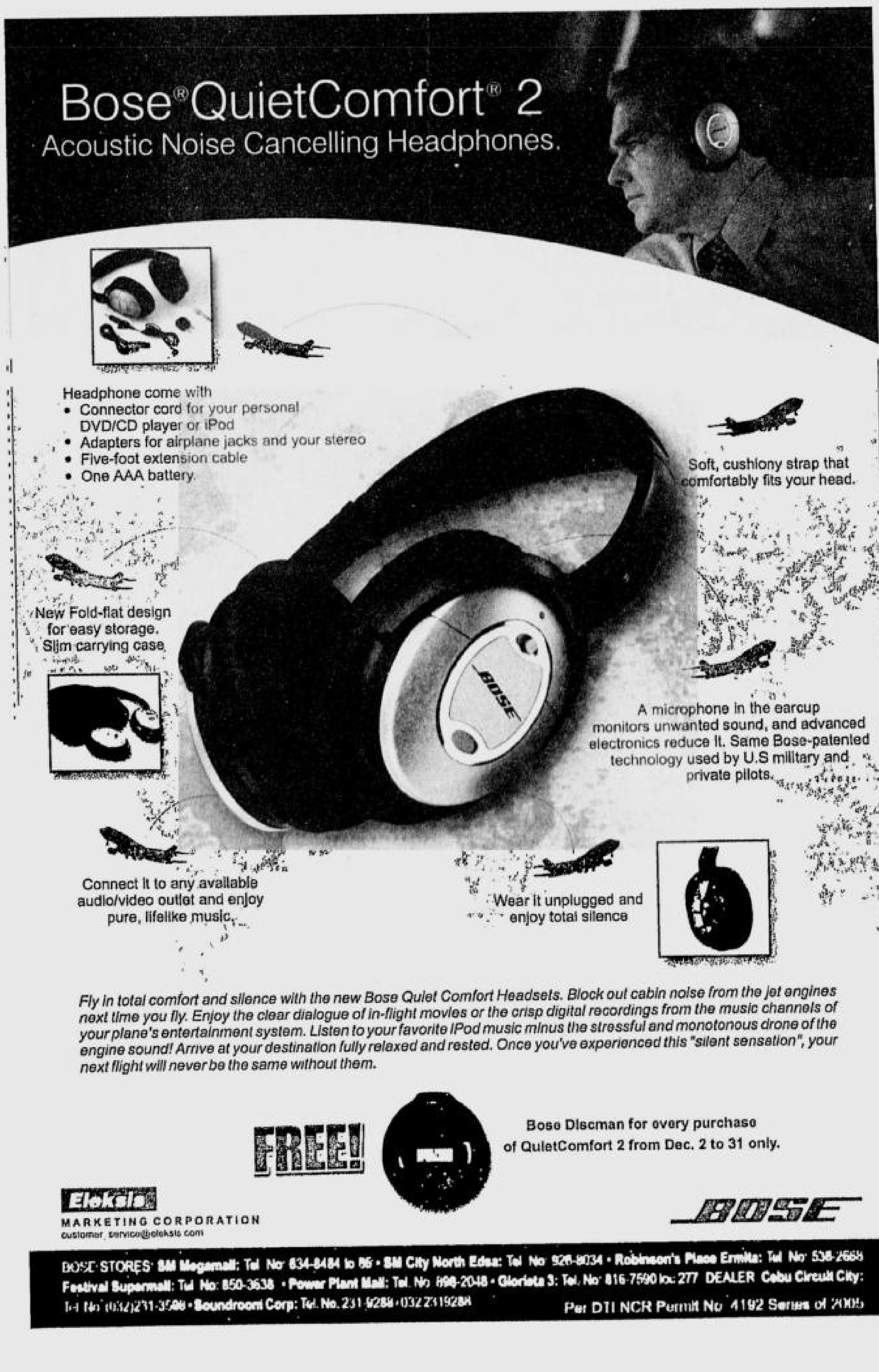

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More investments in eco-friendly vehicles sought

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A BILL HAS BEEN FILED IN Congress seeking to remove excise taxes on vehicles powered by alternative fuels, in an effort to attract further foreign investments in the sector.

Quirino Rep. Junie E. Cua, chair of the House committee on trade and industry, last week filed House Bill No. 4989 aimed at amending the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997.

Cua explained that changes in the Code were needed to encourage the manufacture and use of such vehicles since this would promote the use of indigenous, more environment-friendly energy resources.

He added that the use of vehicles that run on alternative fuels "addresses the ever-increasing cost of fuel in the world market (keeping in mind that) the transport sector is one of the highest fuel-consuming sectors."

HB 4989 seeks to amend Section 149 of the NIR Code, in effect exempting from excise taxes vehicles that run on compressed natural gas and electricity as well as "flex-fuel" and hybrid vehicles or those that can run on a combination of fuel types.

The bill defined CNG and electric vehicles as those designed to run only on CNG and electricity, respectively.

Flex-fuel vehicles are those that were designed to run on regular unleaded gasoline (ULG) and alcohol fuel, which has two kinds—one that runs on a mixture of ULG and ethanol and another on a blend of ULG and coco-methyl ester which is an additive produced from coconuts.

The bill requires that flex-fuel vehicles, to qualify for excise tax exemption, should run on bio-ethanol with at least 20 percent ethanol or on bio-diesel with at least 5 percent CME.

The proposed law also defined hybrid vehicles as those that use a combination of electric batteries and gasoline or diesel to run their electric motors and internal combustion engines.

The Garci tapes are fake

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

FEELING A BIT UNDER THE WEATHER LAST Tuesday, I decided to take the afternoon off. There was nothing interesting on TV, so I watched the Garcillano show. It was the best sitcom I have seen in years.

The congressmen were missing—or hiding—the main issue on the Garci tapes. The main issue is this: Technology, equipment and expertise are now available in Metro Manila for taping the voices of two real people engaged in a conversation that never took place.

That needs repeating: Technology, equipment and expertise are now available in Metro Manila for taping the voices of two real people engaged in a conversation that never took place.

I am prepared to bet a case of pale pilsen beer that one place where the technology, equipment and expertise are available is the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, (Isafp).

Did you not catch the testimony of Marietta Santos, T/Sgt. Doble's number three, at Senator Biazon's committee hearings? She said, among many other things, Isafp was wiretapping the President's telephones. Do you wonder why?

The Garci tapes are the recordings of the authentic voices of President Arroyo and Garcillano. But, except for the first chat fourteen days after the elections, the conversations recorded in the tapes never took place.

If the conversations did take place, how come the tapes surfaced only a year after? Because it took that long to tape three hours of fake conversations.

Whoever produced the tapes—let's call him Lobo—started wiretapping the cell and landline phones of President Arroyo and Garcillano right after the 2004 elections.

When Lobo had enough recorded material, he produced the Garci tapes by electronically transferring words and phrases into what was later referred to as the master tapes. The recorded background noise in the original tapes was filtered out and new background noise was added onto the master tapes. The whole project took a year to finish.

The technique is used extensively in movie making. A scene is shot on location. The dialogue is dubbed later in the studio. But if the actors are not available at the dubbing session, their voices are dubbed in electronically, provided there are enough recorded materials of the actors' voices.

Then Lobo sent copies of the tapes to willing patsies. Kit Tatad found a tape in his mailbox. Hungry to be back in the limelight, Tatad waved the tapes in Congress and on TV talk shows. Tatad is now back in the shadows.

Disbarred lawyer Alan Paguia got a copy, doctored it, and presented it in Congress. His presentation got nowhere.

Former NBI deputy director Sammy Ong got a set. He took the bait—hook, line and sinker. He was supposed to have kidnapped T/Sgt. Doble and sought sanctuary at the San Carlos seminary in Guadalupe, Makati.

For his trouble, Ong is now in hiding to avoid arrest. He now threatens to come out in the open with more master tapes.

No voice expert—certainly not Randy David—can authenticate the Garci tapes by just playing the tapes, even repeatedly. Only a similar set of equipment that produced them can detect the fakery.

But in this heavily charged political atmosphere, nobody in the private sector with the equipment will come forward to offer his expertise. Thus, we will never know the whole truth about the tapes.

Somehow, I cannot get rid of this sneaky feeling that those who have been crying for the whole truth do not really want the whole truth to come out because they know the whole truth is that the Garci tapes are fake.

DOF bucks proposal to lower taxes on stock transactions

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE IS NOT IN favor of a proposal to either lower or totally remove the stock transaction tax (STT) on the trading of stocks.

The DOF said in a position paper that it would be better for the government to entertain proposals for tax incentives once it puts its fiscal house in order.

The DOF estimated that proposals to either reduce the STT from the current 0.5 of 1 percent to only 0.1 of one percent, or to abolish the tax would result in revenue losses of as much as P1 billion a year.

The suggestion of easing the tax imposed on stock transaction was floated by members of the equities market who said fiscal incentives would help bring in more investors to the market and boost the country's sluggish capital market.

Proponents believe that a lower tax would increase the trading volume in the Philippine Stock Exchange.

"It will surely contribute to capital market development, but its immediate impact would be to reduce NG (national government) revenues," the DOF said.

"With pressing concerns to bring down the deficit, a proposal to lower the tax may be ill-timed," the DOF added.

Finance officials have said the government's fiscal position was improving, but that it still has a deficit to wipe out.

The DOF said efforts to improve revenue collection, such as implementation of an expanded coverage of the value-added tax, and the management of expenditures were expected to help government balance its budget by 2008 and post a surplus by 2009.

The DOF said in its position paper that it would support efforts to boost the capital market through fiscal incentives once the government solves its budget problem.

The budget deficit this year was estimated to stand between P160 to P165 billion, lower than last year's P184.6 billion and below the ceiling of P180 billion set for 2005.

"Nonetheless, a restructuring of the tax on gains from stock transactions with a premium to long-term holdings may be considered a capital market strategy in the the medium term," the DOF said.

The finance department also said that as the government reduces its budget deficit, the government could take advantage of existing measures that already support capital market development.

It noted that interests on long-term lending, or those with maturity of at least five years, were already subject to zero gross receipt tax.

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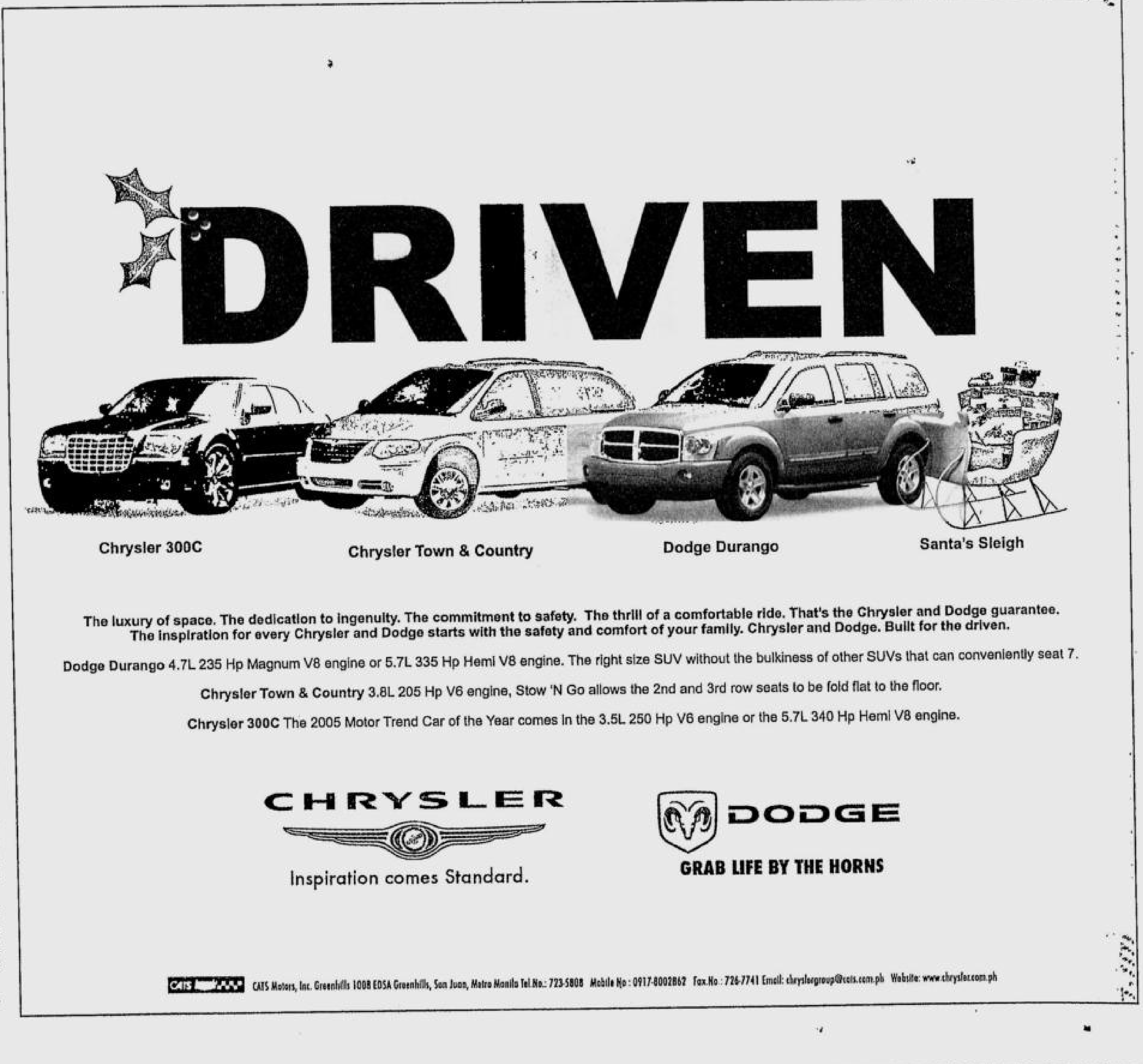

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ATR Kim Eng bullish on RP stocks

Improved fiscal numbers attracting equities investors

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ATR KIM ENG SECURITIES, ONE OF THE country's largest brokerage houses, is bullish on the Philippine stock market next year as investors continue to bet on improved fiscal numbers.

The budget deficit of the national government hit P7.3 billion in November, slightly above the ceiling for the month, but still manageable enough for the government to post a budget gap below the P180 billion ceiling set for 2005.

For the January to November period, the budget gap was P122.8 billion, lower than the maximum of P160.5 billion for the period.

ATR KE noted that the stock market rose to its highest level in eight months with investors seeing an improvement in the country's credit rating after the passage and implementation of the expanded value-added tax law.

"Investors' optimism in the Philippine equities market has always been linked to the passage of the eVAT law," said ATRKE Securities president Lorenzo Roxas in a statement.

"The equity, currency, and bond markets all put in stellar performances upon the eVAT law's implementation," he added.

Roxas said the market uptrend may continue to next year.

"The smooth implementation of the VAT this month, coupled with early reports of good earnings for several companies, have boosted investor sentiment," he said.

He added: "You have a few good initial public offerings (IPOs) coming out during the first half of 2006. The timing as well could not have been better as world crude prices went down and overseas workers remittances helped strengthen the value of the peso."

ATRKE Securities is one of the country's largest brokerage houses, with more than 15 years of experience in the Philippine equities market.

Ranked third among brokers in value traded in 2004, ATRKE Securities has always maintained its confidence in the local stock market.

Aside from Makati, ATRKE Securities also has branches in Cebu and Davao.

"We plan to open a few more branches in strategic cities in the country in the next five years," said Roxas.

The company provides financial research, sales and execution capabilities to institutional and retail clients, both foreign and domestic.

Its research strength was recognized by the Fund Managers Association of the Philippines, naming the firm "Best in Research for Small Companies" and among the best in Overall Equity Research.

The Asset, Asia's leading finance magazine for corporate and institutional investors, has also named ATRKE Securities the top domestic brokerage house in the country for two years in a row.

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SM property group to raise ₱1B for projects in 2006

SM DEVELOPMENT CORP., THE RESIDENTIAL and commercial development arm of mall tycoon Henry Sy, would need more than P1 billion for major projects next year, said SMDC president Rogelio Cabuñag.

Cabuñag said SMDC was planning to build a 30-story condominium-commercial center on a 1.4-hectare property near the SM Centerpoint mall in Sta. Mesa, Manila, in joint venture with sister company Banco de Oro Universal Bank.

The mixed-use facility may be launched early in the first quarter next year, with construction to start before the end of 2006.

The target market for this project is the middle to high-end residential user who can afford to pay around P5 million for a condominium unit.

SMDC is likewise set to launch its 5,200-hectare leisure property dubbed "Hacienda Looc" in Nasugbu, Batangas, next year.

Hacienda Looc has 31 kilometers of coastline and 13 beach covers.

While the master design has yet to be finalized, Hacienda Looc will initially have a beach club, sports center, an 18-hole golf course, and comprehensive water and mountain sports facilities for the initial phase.

SMDC will also add two phases to its French Mediterranean condoville in Bicutan, Parañaque, dubbed Chateau Elysee.

Phase II of the six-cluster development will be turned over to owners by February next year. Each phase contains four towers.

As of 2004, it has turned over units to 40 residents.

SMDC had said it enjoyed a 97.8-percent growth in its consolidated net income to P577.7 million in the first nine months from P292 million in the same period last year.

This was despite a decrease in total revenues by 20 percent to P366 million in the nine-month period from P459.26 million in the same period last year, following the decline in the sale of real estate products.

Dividend income grew 80.2 percent to P98.7 million, accounting for 27 percent of total revenues due to contributions from its stakes in Banco de Oro, Edsa Properties, China Banking Corp., Highlands Prime Inc., Keppel Philippines Marine and Subic Shipyard.

The robust growth in dividend income cushioned the decline in contributions from traditional revenues sources. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

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Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,175,000	Please Call
Baguio Country Club	550,000	500,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	40,000	20,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	50,000
Camp John Hay	200,000	165,000
Canlubang	550,000	490,000
Canyon Woods	125,000	-
Capitol Hills	70,000	45,000
Cebu Country Club	-	1,300,000
Celebrity Sports Club	120,000	100,000
Club Filipino	140,000	-
Eagleridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	-
Forest Hills "A"	140,000	100,000
Forest Hills "B"	Please Call	-
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	-
Luisita Golf "A"	350,000	-
Makati Sports Club "A"	200,000	165,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	250,000	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	11,500,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	11,000,000
Manila Polo	2,200,000	2,100,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	370,000	300,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	720,000	600,000
Manila Yacht Club	400,000	-
Metroclub "A"	120,000	90,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	450,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	230,000	200,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	350,000	-
Orchard Golf Club "A"	180,000	150,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	-	280,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	430,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	170,000	130,000
Rockwell	Please Call	-
Spa & Lodge	520,000	-
Sta. Elena "A"	1,300,000	1,100,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,600,000	-
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Baguio Country Club	-	520,000
Calatagan Golf	Pls. Call	40,000
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Canlubang Golf	550,000	Pls. Call
Canyon Woods	120,000	-
Capitol Hills	60,000	
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	1,300,000
Celebrity Sports	120,000	100,000
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Manila Golf Corporate	Pls. Call	-
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Manila Polo	Pls. Call	2,100,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	370,000/Pls. Call*	300,000
Makati Sports Club	-	165,000
Manila Yacht Club Ind.	400,000	250,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	120,000/150,000*	90,000
Mimosa Ind./C2*/C3**	Pls. Call	150,000
Mt. Malarayat A	230,000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	170,000/Pls. Call*/400,000**	150,000
Puerto Azul	Pls. Call	-
Punta Fuego	Pls. Call	
Quezon City Sports Club	160,000	130,000
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	90,000/180,000*/250,000**	130,000*
Rockwell Leisure Club	Pls. Call	180,000
Royale Tagaytay CC	80,000	
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/150,000**	60,000*
Spa & Lodge	530,000	-
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	Pls. Call	1,100,000/1,500,000*
Subic Golf	Pls. Call	-
Subic Yacht Club	Pls. Call	
The Palms Country Club	Pls. Call	350,000
Tagaytay Country Club	360,000	330,000
Tagaytay Highlands	730,000	680,000
Tagaytay Midlands	Pls. Call	600,000
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Tower Club	Pls. Call	-
Valley Golf	220,000	180,000
Valle Verde Ind.	100,000	
Wack Wack Golf	6,400,000	6,000,000

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More IPOs seen in 2006

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange is optimistic that more companies will sell their shares to the public through an initial public offering next year.

PSE president Francis Lim said he expected at least three major companies to offer their shares to the public next year.

These are power generation firm First Generation Corp., television giant GMA Network Inc. and petroleum refining and distribution firm Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp.

First Gen plans to raise $200 million from an IPO by Feb. 8.

GMA 7, on the other hand, may offer 20 percent of its shares to the public.

Lim added that he was urging companies like United Laboratories Inc., National Bookstore and health and beauty products distributor Splash to proceed with their IPO plans. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 16, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	32	33	32	33	152,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	54	54.5	54	54	1,259,500
China Banking Corp.	605	605	600	600	300
Citystate Savings Bank	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	500
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	300,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	54.5	55	54	55	76,200
International Exch. Bank	21.25	21.25	21.25	21.25	5,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32.5	33	32.5	33	735,600
Philippine National Bank	32	32	31.5	31.5	21,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	5,600
Security Bank Corp.	32	32	31.5	32	213,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	17,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	20,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	3120	3120	3120	3120	10
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	140	140	140	140	100
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2100	2100	2100	2100	100
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	77,800
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.89	0.9	0.89	0.9	720,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	740	740	720	720	27,150
Ipeople Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.85	2.85	35,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	10,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.35	3.4	3.3	3.4	2,118,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1770	1770	1745	1745	20,750
Ivantage Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	450,000
Philweb Corp.	0.015	0.016	0.015	0.016	118,800,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	15	15	15	15	50,200
Manila Electric Co. B	23	23	22.75	22.75	234,600
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.3	4,061,000
Petron Corp.	4.45	4.45	4.3	4.35	2,405,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.6	1.76	1.6	1.72	116,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	80,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	6,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	9.4	9.4	9.3	9.3	1,063,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	210,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	251,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	520,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.45	4.5	4.3	4.35	10,866,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	22.5	22.5	22	22	50,400
Jollibee Foods Corp.	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	360,200
Pancake House Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.6	3.6	24,000
RFM Corp.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64	64.5	64	64.5	106,500
San Miguel Corp. B	86	86	83.5	84	174,500
Universal Robina Corp.	18	18	18	18	27,100
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	312.5	315	302.5	307.5	307,070
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.44	110,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.75	4.8	4.75	4.8	241,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.08	2.08	2.08	2.08	259,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	150,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	275,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	300,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.14	5,654,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	450,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.32	6,820,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3	3.1	3	3.1	600,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	1,400,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	50,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	48	48.5	47	47.5	540,800
Global Business Hldgs Inc.	58	58	58	58	100
House Of Investments Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	150,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.25	3.25	829,000
Keppel Holdings	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	600,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.22	1.24	1,873,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	2,330,000
Paxys Inc.	5.8	5.9	5.7	5.8	493,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.26	1.28	220,000
SM Investments Corp.	245	245	237	240	136,260
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	200,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	10,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	3,330,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION& TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	60,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.99	0.99	0.97	0.98	2,550,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.44	293,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	300,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	13.5	13.5	12.75	13	618,500
DMCI Holdings Inc.- PREF.	1000	1000	1000	1000	87,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8.9	9	8.9	9	50,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9.6	9.7	9.5	9.6	4,613,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	218,000
C & P Homes Inc.	2.02	2.1	2	2.04	193,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	2,390,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.32	2,582,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	800,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	50,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.125	0.125	0.12	0.12	3,000,000
SM Development Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	20,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.6	23,735,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	50,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	47,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.8	5.9	5.6	5.9	161,000
Benguet Corp. A	7.5	7.5	7.2	7.2	13,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	10,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.215	6,090,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	5,260,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	48,100,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.029	0.03	0.029	0.03	15,100,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	26,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.3	1.3	1.28	1.3	920,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.6	1.64	1.58	1.64	3,987,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28	28.5	27.5	28.5	272,300
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	105,000,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	5,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	30,000

CURRENCIES

December 16, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.834934	1.000000	53.2340
Japan	Yen	0.007184	0.008604	0.4580
United Kingdom	Pound	1.473658	1.765000	93.9580
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.107704	0.128997	6.8670
Switzerland	Franc	0.647687	0.775735	41.2955
Canada	Dollar	0.720640	0.863111	45.9469
Singapore	Dollar	0.500650	0.599628	31.9206
Australia	Dollar	0.623923	0.747272	39.7803
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.215207	2.653153	141.2379
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.222643	0.266660	14.1954
Brunei	Dollar	0.499153	0.597836	31.8252
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000102	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.020414	0.024450	1.3016
UAE	Dirham	0.227329	0.272272	14.4941
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.197700	63.7584
Argentina	Peso	0.277387	0.332226	17.6857
Brazil	Real	0.363299	0.435123	23.1633
Denmark	Kroner	0.134195	0.160725	8.5560
India	Rupee	0.018440	0.022085	1.1757
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.221116	0.264831	14.0980
Mexico	New Peso	0.077759	0.093132	4.9578
New Zealand	Dollar	0.577848	0.692089	36.8427
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013969	0.016731	0.8907
South Africa	Rand	0.129904	0.155586	8.2825
Korea	Won	0.000825	0.000988	0.0526
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025165	0.030140	1.6045

PDEx GS BENCHMARKS

Philippine Dealing & Exchange Corp. (PDEx)
Friday, Dec. 16, 2005, (as of 4:30 p.m.)

Tenor	Today	Change from previous day	Change from previous week	Change from previous month
1M	6.2500	0.00	0.00	0.08
3M	6.2500	0.00	(0.05)	0.05
6M	7.5000	0.00	(0.10)	(0.38)
1Y	8.2500	(0.05)	(0.25)	(0.68)
2Y	9.1500	0.00	(0.20)	(0.48)
3Y	9.3500	0.09	(0.25)	(0.68)
4Y	9.4500	(0.18)	(0.28)	(0.70)
5Y	9.8250	0.02	(0.10)	(0.58)
7Y	10.0000	(0.05)	(0.23)	(0.50)
10Y	10.2250	(0.03)	(0.53)	(0.98)
20Y	11.6250	0.00	0.00	0.00
25Y	11.8750	0.13	0.00	(0.45)

PDEX TRADING VOLUME

Instrument	Weekly Total Volume (In million PHP)
FXTNs	7,978.6
TBILLs	189.0
RTBs	360.0
TOTAL	8,638.2

NOTE: PDEx Benchmarks are calculated from the weighted average yields of done transactions, best midrates, or best firm bid rates as the case maybe for 12 tenors at 4 p.m. daily. The PDEx Benchmarks may be used to compare interest rate bases for loans, deposits and other financial instruments that have variable rates.

GMA 7 earmarks ₱1B for expansion in '06

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

GMA NETWORK INC., THE COUNTRY'S most profitable television network, is earmarking around P1 billion for its expansion projects in 2006, company chair Felipe Gozon said.

Gozon said GMA 7 was hoping to complete the expansion of its international channels by next year. He said the company had been negotiating with foreign cable carriers to air GMA 7 shows in Middle East and Europe by next year.

Gozon said he was expecting the signing of a deal with Orbit, the biggest Middle East cable carrier, before the end of the year.

The GMA 7 chief is also planning to introduce GMA 7 shows in Europe—particularly in Rome, England and France—next year to expand its international coverage.

Locally, GMA 7 has started upgrading its transmitter and other facilities in Dagupan, Batangas and Naga. It has been doing the same for Cebu and Davao. These, he said, was aimed at further improving GMA 7's signal and reach in these areas to gain market leadership.

As part of its overseas expansion, GMA 7 and Guam Cablevision LLC signed a license agreement for the distribution of GMA Pinoy TV, GMA's international channel in the US territory of Guam.

Guam Cablevision is the second overseas carrier of GMA Pinoy TV. The first is IPS Inc., which carries GMA Pinoy TV in Japan via the Access TV DTH (Direct-to-Home) platform.

LandBank seeks $100M loan from World Bank

By Christine A. Gaylican

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES said it would secure another $100 million worth of funding from the World Bank for its rural and micro financing programs.

This would be the third time that Land Bank would tap a World Bank loan under the so-called Countryside Livelihood Facility (CLF) project. This facility extends wholesale and retail loans to conduit banks for relending to small and medium enterprises and agribusiness projects.

"We are in talks with World Bank for the continuation of the CLF project and this will mean not less than $100 million in new loan that we will re-lend to these priority sectors," said Land Bank president and chief executive officer Gilda E. Pico in an interview last week.

She noted that with the World Bank loan, LandBank was able to strengthen its lending program for small farmers and fisher folk which, as of October, amounted to P13.3 billion.

"The amount represents 83 percent of the bank's target of P16 billion for the year. The fund was channeled through 992 cooperatives, 393 countryside financial institutions and the Quedan Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp. (Quedancor)," Pico said.

Makati Med president resigns

From page B1

The condition did change on Dec. 12 when some of the board members met without Mendoza.

"After the meeting, our chairman Manny Pangilinan told me on behalf of the majority of the board that they could no longer give me the authority I asked for," said Mendoza. "So I resigned immediately. There was no sense in staying any longer if I didn't have the powers of a president and a CEO."

The AIM professor said he agreed to stay until the end of the month, during which the board must find a replacement for him.

Mendoza was appointed by the controlling owners of Makati Med, who wanted to implement corporate restructuring after the hospital sustained P300 million in losses over the last three years.

Due to a faulty accounting system, Makati Med discovered the losses only in December 2004. Before that, the once premier hospital thought it was still earning.

The hospital has about P1.2 billion in maturing debts that it wants to restructure. But banks have insisted that at least P100 million must first be infused into Makati Med to aid its recovery.

In July, the hospital brought in some new board members, including telco czar Pangilinan and banker Francisco Dizon to help effect the changes.

About one-third of the hospital's shares are controlled by the families of Fores and Araneta.

About 25 percent are held by the heirs of other founders, like the Manahans and Alimurungs. The rest are owned by more than 100 doctors connected to the hospital.

Before Mendoza came in, the hospital's books were in disarray. There were huge receivables that have not been collected. Several pieces of medical equipment, reported to be overpriced, are now lying idle.

There were allegations of mismanagement and excesses among those who control the hospital.

Mendoza believed his six-month stint at the hospital helped in stopping the hemorrhage.

Banks' bad loans rose in Oct.

Proposed SPV law extension seen to ease industry's burden

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE RATIO OF BAD LOANS TO THE TOTAL loan portfolio of Philippine commercial banks inched up to 9.65 percent in October from 9.43 percent a month ago, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported.

The increase in the NPL ratio was due to a one-percent rise in bad loans to P172.35 billion, and a 1.2-percent reduction in the banks' total loan portfolio to P1.79 trillion from month-ago level.

"This month's NPL ratio is still better by 4.56 percentage points than the year-ago level of 14.21 percent," the BSP said in a report.

This year, the banking system's NPL burden fell to a single digit level for the first time in seven years, as the special purpose vehicle (SPV) framework allowed banks to unload the bulk of their bad assets.

The sector's NPL ratio peaked at 18.81 percent in October 2001. It started going down substantially last year as banks made use of SPVs.

The law that created the SPV framework, which expired last April, had allowed banks to clean up about P95 billion in bad assets.

The SPV Law waived some of the taxes and reduced fees imposed on the sale or transfer of assets. It waived the documentary stamp tax, capital gains tax and e-VAT (expanded value added tax) and reduced the registration/transfer fees by 50 percent.

Net of inter-bank loans, the BSP reported that the NPL ratio went up to 11.51 percent from 11.34 percent in September.

The ratio of restructured loans to the total loan portfolio in October increased to 5.99 percent from the previous month's 5.95 percent. These restructured loans now amounted to P107.59 billion.

A debt restructuring can cover a whole range of debt concessions—including the lengthening of maturity, lowering of interest rates and conversion of debt into equity. It gives borrowers a chance to pay their obligations, improve their credit standing and revive their businesses.

The restructured NPLs increased by 4.1 percent to P51.81 billion or 48.15 percent of total. This was 45.93 percent higher than the month ago level.

The ratio of real and other properties owned or acquired to gross assets rose to 5.12 percent from 5.07 percent in the previous month. Gross assets declined by 1 percent even as Ropoas barely moved to P200.13 billion.

The ratio of the industry's non-performing assets—the sum of NPLs and Ropoas—to total assets rose to 9.32 percent from 9.19 percent in the previous month. This, however, was substantially lower than the year-ago level of 12.19 percent.

In the meantime, the sector's NPL and NPA ratios stood at 73.65 percent and 40.11 percent, respectively, down from 74.55 percent and 40.23 percent a month ago.

Loan loss reserves as of end October amounted to P126.94 billion while NPA reserves were placed at P145.76 billion.

Bankers have asked Congress to revive the SPV Law to speed up the sale of their remaining bad assets.

With the proposed extension of the law, the BSP expects the banking system to unload another P100 billion worth of bad assets. This will enable the banking system to trim its bad loan ratio to about 7.5 percent.

Feasibility study on Victoria nickel project resumed

AGLUBANG MINING CORP. AND CREW MINERALS (Phils.) Inc will send about 500 kilos of soil and rock samples from their Mindoro nickel project in Victoria, Oriental Mindoro to Australia shortly to determine the commercial viability of the venture.

The company said it had drilled about 18 holes in recent weeks to get the sample materials. Each hole drilled took less space than drilling deep wells for water. Mangyans, the indigenous people of Mindoro, and lowlanders were employed for the job on an equal-pay basis.

If viable, the project will have among its first priorities the protection of the soil and a flood control system that will benefit both the mine and the surrounding communities.

Unlike other mineral ores which are imbedded in rocks, the laterite nickel in the area is just under the top soil, which is being washed away by the rains to low-lying areas. The mining area used to be a logging concession.

"We have to protect the soil from erosion to keep the nickel in place. The mining process we plan to use would benefit the surrounding communities not just environmentally but in terms of creating jobs, community development, infrastructure support, among other things," the company said.

To help the project's host community, the company had built a footbridge to enable the Mangyans to cross the Aglubang River during the wet season; maintained a free medical clinic; provided electrical power to the host barangay; constructed a tribal house for the Mangyans; sponsored livelihood projects, and helped maintain local roads.

"If and when we commit ourselves to the area, and start continuous activity, we envisage that the project will come to play an even bigger role in the community's growth and development," the company said.

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The new BMW 3 Series			Then	Now
BMW 320i	Sparkling Graphite	2005	P2,345,000	**P2,228,000**
BMW 320i	Arctic	2005	P2,345,000	**P2,228,000**
BMW 320i	Titanium Silver	2005	P2,345,000	**P2,228,000**
BMW 330i Exec.	Titanium Silver	2005	P4,075,000	**P3,870,000**
BMW 3 Series			Then	Now
BMW 316i	Titanium Silver	2002	P1,795,000	P1,050,000
BMW 318i Exec.	Orient Blue	2004	P2,550,000	P1,750,000
BMW 318i Exec.	Titanium Silver	2004	P2,550,000	P1,750,000
BMW 325i M Sport (SMG)	Imola Red	2004	P3,600,000	P2,665,000
BMW 318i M Sport	Titanium Silver	2004	P2,950,000	P1,850,000
BMW 318i M Sport	Topaz Blue	2004	P2,950,000	P1,850,000
BMW 325i Exec.	Black Sapphire	2004	P3,500,000	P2,200,000
BMW 325i Exec.	Titanium Silver	2004	P3,500,000	P2,200,000
BMW 1 Series			Then	Now
BMW 116i Exec.	Titanium Silver	2005	P1,795,000	P1,705,000
BMW 118i Exec.	Titanium Silver	2005	P1,990,000	P1,890,000
BMW 120i Exec.	Black Sapphire	2005	P2,195,000	P2,085,000
BMW Z4			Then	Now
BMW Z4 2.5i Roadster	Toledo Blue	2005	P3,811,000	P2,900,000
BMW Z4 2.5i Roadster	Sterling Grey	2003	P3,811,000	P2,800,000
BMW Z4 2.5i Roadster	Black Sapphire	2004	P3,811,000	P2,900,000
BMW 5 Series			Then	Now
BMW 525i Exec.	Titanium Silver	2005	P4,879,000	P4,460,000
BMW 525i Exec.	Black Sapphire	2004	P4,879,000	P3,800,000
BMW 530d Exec.	Black Sapphire	2004	P5,089,000	P3,700,000
BMW 520i Limousine	Mystic Blue	2005	P4,070,000	P3,800,000
BMW 520i Exec.	Alpine White	2005	P4,070,000	P3,800,000
BMW X Series			Then	Now
BMW X3 2.5i SAV	Alpine White	2005	P3,621,000	P3,309,000
BMW X3 2.5i Exec.	Titanium Silver	2004	P3,962,000	P3,000,000
BMW X3 2.5i Exec.	Titanium Silver	2005	P3,962,000	P3,620,000
BMW X5 3.0d Exec.	Titanium Silver	2005	P5,712,000	P5,100,000
BMW X5 3.0i Exec.	Black Sapphire	2004	P5,712,000	P4,700,000
BMW X5 3.0d Lim. Ed.	Black Sapphire	2005	P5,512,000	P5,236,000
BMW 7 Series			Then	Now
BMW 730Li	Black Sapphire	2004	P6,950,000	P6,200,000
BMW 745Li	Black Sapphire	2004	P8,975,000	P7,100,000

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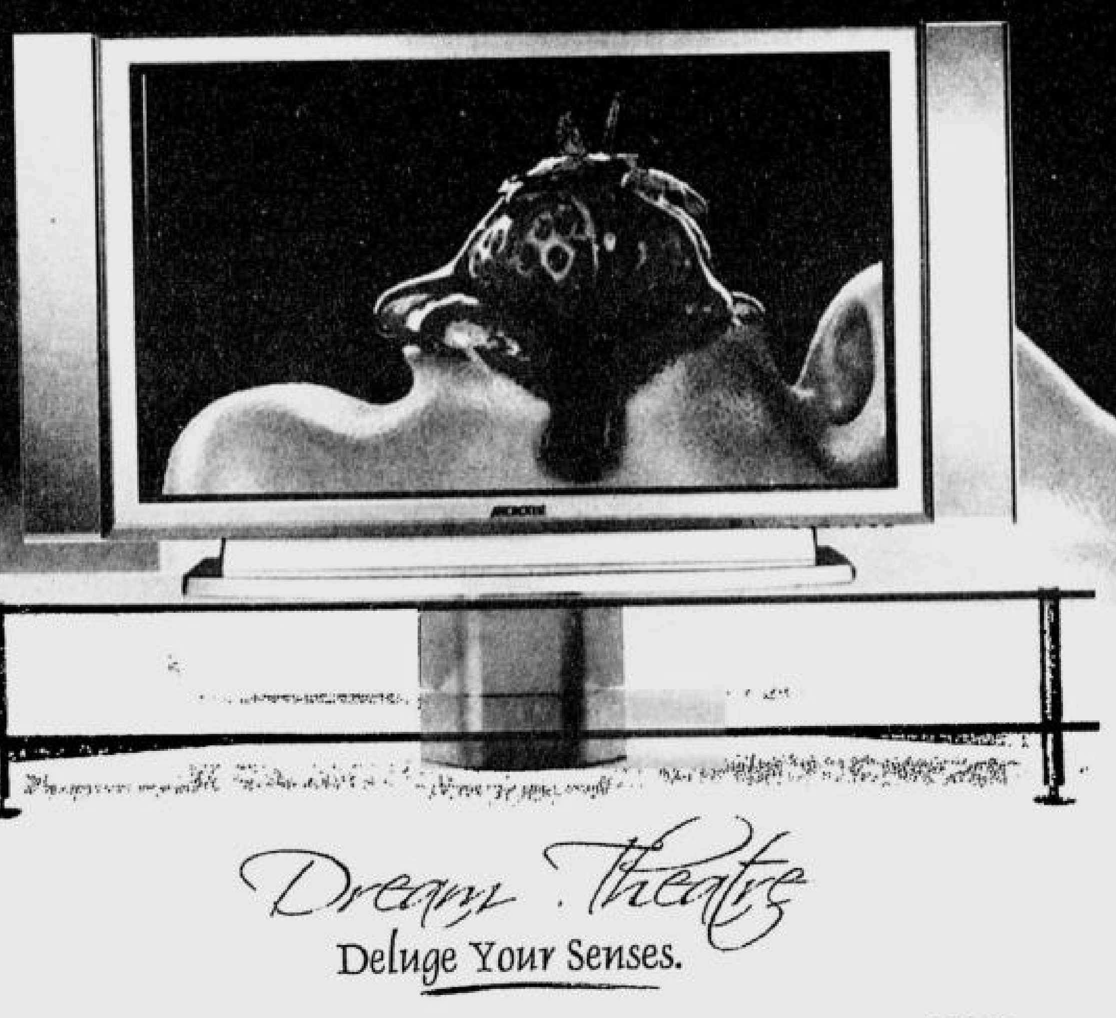

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PROVIDENT VILL nr ATENEO 413m² w/ 3hses nr gate P4M LOT ONLY 301m² gate Rush 2.2Mneg T6356003; 9338423

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HOUSE & LOT

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MAKATI
- Legaspi Village 119 Rada St. FCC Bldg. 1/F Two (2) office condos 35 & 46m² P1.9M & P2.4M Beside One Legaspi Park Nr Union Church
- Ayala Ave. Urdaneta Apts Res. Condo 245m² P17M facing Urdaneta Village

MANILA
- Malate Adriatico Vacant 1189m² Frontage 28M Negotiable
- Sta. Cruz Rizal Ave 1112m² Frontage 35M Negotiable Nr Valeriano Fugoso (Zurbaran)

MUNTINLUPA
- Ayala Alabang Tamarind Dr. Lot 746m² w/2-stry concrete res GFA 524m² 4BDR / 3T&B, den / T&B, Sprawling Lanai, Dining, Clean / Dirty Kitchens, 2 Car Garage P18.5M Rear Forest Backdrop
- Alabang Hills Don Manolo Blvd. Vacant Lot 800m² P8M Near San Beda - Alabang

PASAY CITY
Park Ave. Rear Primero de Mayo Lot 1490 sqm w/old semi-concrete res. Negotiable Nr Taft Avenue

MANDALUYONG CITY
Ortigas Center San Miguel Ave 10,509 sqm Frontage 112.03M Negotiable Near SMC

QUEZON CITY
Novaliches Gen. Luis St 10520m² Frontage 28M Negotiable Nr CC Unson.

PARAÑAQUE
Roxas Blvd Bayview Village 5318m² Frontage 42M Negotiable Nr Bayview Towers

LAS PIÑAS
Daang Hari Portofino Heights 4 lots 328,343, 349 & 361m² Negotiable Nr Ayala Alabang

PASIG
Ortigas Ave Ext Cor Lot 15000m² Frontage 135M Negotiable After Ugong Interchange

SAN JUAN
Eisenhower 1000m² Frontage 20M Negotiable Nr Club Filipino

MALABON
Tugatog MH del Pilar Cor. Gov Pascual Three (3) Adjacent Lots 4538, 2498 & 3598m² Frontage 70x150M Negotiable Nr Mercury Drug

TAGAYTAY CITY
National Highway Two (2) Vacant Lots 19881/17608m² Frontage 101/115M P4,000/sqm. Between Rotonda / Lourdes Church

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NR LA SALLE TAFT
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REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE

MANDALUYONG

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SAN JUAN

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BnewThse/3stry/3br/3-4tb maids 1-2 grge P3.790Mup 8903461

LOT

ALABANG

P13T/m² Rush 0917-7648987

MAKATI

3.5M P.BINAY ST 09208309744

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CONDO/TWNHSE

MANILA

1 & 2BR Nr.PGH 5634007/5891978

NR LASALLE 3BR 3TB 8992148

Units 4 Stdnts 09155835289

PASIG

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Pag-IBIG Fund
The Atrium of Makati
Makati Avenue, City of Makati

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(2ND Publication)

The Pag-IBIG Fund, through its Bids and Awards Committee – Goods and Services (BAC-GS), invites qualified contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **Supply and Maintenance of Ornamental (Indoor) Plants at the Pag-IBIG Fund Corporate Headquarters and NCR Branches for Y2006-Y2007 (Lease Contract Basis)** with an Approved Budget of **Two Million Three Hundred Eighteen Thousand Six Hundred Eighty Eight 00/100 Pesos (P2,318,688.00) Only.**

Prospective bidders must have the experience in undertaking a contract similar to the subject of bidding within the required period specified in the Terms of Reference (TOR) and a contract amount of at least 50% of the approved budget. The Eligibility Check/ Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted accordingly.

Bid Documents will be made available to prospective bidders starting **December 12, 2005** from the Procurement Section, General Services 7th Floor, Atrium of Makati Condominium, Makati Avenue, Makati City upon payment of the required Five Hundred and 00/100 Pesos (P500.00) to the Cash Division, Treasury Department, Pag-IBIG Fund Corporate Headquarters.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bid Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **December 27, 2005** at Room 602, 6th Floor, Pag-IBIG Fund Multi-Purpose Hall, The Atrium of Makati Condominium, Makati Ave., Makati City at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon.

Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Opening of Bids is tentatively scheduled on January 9, 2006 at Room 602, 6th Floor, Pag-IBIG Fund Multi-Purpose Hall, The Atrium of Makati Condominium, Makati Ave., Makati City at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon.

The Pag-IBIG Fund reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informality or accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the government. Further, the Fund assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses or losses that may be incurred in participating in this bidding.

For further inquiries and/or information, please call Messrs. Angeles P. Balena, Jose Maria M. Diaz or Cesar V. Racoma at 811-42-62, 894-58-15 or visit our Corporate Website at http://www.pagibigfund.gov.ph or e-mail us at hdmfgpis@info.com.ph.

(Sgd.) **Emma Linda B. Faria**
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(PDI - Dec. 12 & 19, 2005)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Bernardo Amandy has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs, Generosa Vargas-Amandy, Rev. Fr. Alex Vargas Amandy, and Amelia Amandy-Jacinto, before Notary Public Marilyn L. Gargantiel of Q.C. as per Doc. #673, Page #109, Book #2, Series of 2001 (PDI-Dec. 12, 19, 26, 2005)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory.
Amen -CCC

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INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

1. The **PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY** (formerly Public Estates Authority) is inviting all interested parties to prequalify and bid for the lease of twelve (12) pre-selected sites for outdoor billboard advertising along the landstrip of Coastal Road from Barangay Tambo, Parañaque to Barangay Ilaya, Las Piñas City.
2. Qualified Bidders
   a. Any Filipino citizen, of legal age, and
   b. Any partnership, association or corporation, public or private of which at least 70% of the capital stock or of any interest in said capital stock belongs wholly to citizens of the Philippines and which is organized and constituted under the laws of the Philippines.
3. Interested qualified parties may obtain the Terms of Reference and Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of THREE THOUSAND PESOS (P3,000.00) in cash or Manager's/Cashier's check starting **December 22, 2005** until **January 24, 2006** from **9:00 AM to 5:00 PM** at the Marketing Department, 7th Floor Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.
4. The first pre-bid conference is scheduled on **January 18, 2006** at **2:00 PM** at the PRA Conference Room, 8th Floor, Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.
5. Required pre-qualification documents and duly accomplished Bid Documents prescribed in the Terms of Reference shall be submitted to the PRA Real Estates Bids and Awards Committee (PREBAC) on **January 25, 2006** on or before **1:00 PM**. Public opening of bids shall follow at **1:30 PM** of the same day.
6. For further information, inquiries may be made to the Marketing Department in the above address at telephone numbers 817-4711 to 13 (trunk line) and 813-7104 (direct line)

(Sgd.) **TEODORICO C. TAGUINOD**
General Manager/CEO

(PDI-Dec. 16, 19, 28, 2005; Jan. 5, 10 & 16, 2006)

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"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith."
2 Timothy 4:7

Sr. Mariani C. Dimaranan, SFIC

Peacefully joined her Creator on December 17, 2005.

Her remains lie in state at the La Verna Chapel of the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of the Holy Mother of God (SFIC), on #7 16th Street, New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Friday, December 23, 2005 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 8:00 AM Mass at the La Verna Chapel.

Please omit flowers. The Congregation will appreciate a donation to the SFIC Educational Assistance Foundation, Inc., of which Sister Mariani is a Founding Member.

RODOLFO D. MANALO

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord on 17 December 2005, at the age of 76.

His bereaved wife, **Lety**, children, **Carlos**, **Carmen** & **Rodolfo, Jr**; daughter-in-law **Arlene**, son-in-law **Antonio**, and grandchildren, **Ramona**, **Miguel**, **Anton**, **Maia**, **Denise** & **Manito** request the readers to pray for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at Chapel A, Funeraria Paz - Araneta, Q.C.

Cremation will be on December 20, 2005 at 11:00 a.m. after the 10:00 a.m.

We pray that our beloved departed may find rest in the peace of God's kingdom.

TO COMMEMORATE THE

3rd Death ANNIVERSARY

of

Norma Tuason Chua

(March 15, 1946 - December 20, 2002)

MASSES WILL BE OFFERED FOR THE ETERNAL REPOSE OF HER SOUL ON TUESDAY, 20 DECEMBER 2005 AT THE FOLLOWING CHURCHES :

Monasterio de Santa Clara	*Katipunan Road, Quezon City*	6:00 a.m.
Santuario de San Antonio	*Forbes Park, Makati City*	6:15 a.m.
National Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes	*Retiro Street, Quezon City*	6:30 a.m.
San Agustin Church	*Intramuros, Manila*	6:30 a.m.
Malate Catholic Church	*Malate, Manila*	7:00 a.m.
Manila Metropolitan Cathedral	*Intramuros, Manila*	7:30 a.m.
Santo Domingo Church	*Quezon Avenue, Quezon City*	12:15 p.m.
Christ the King Church	*E. Rodriguez Boulevard, Quezon City*	6:00 p.m.
Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel	*New Manila, Quezon City*	6:00 p.m.
Santuario de San Pedro Bautista	*San Francisco Del Monte, Quezon City*	6:00 p.m.
Monasterio de Santa Clara	*Balanga, Bataan*	6:00 p.m.
Saint Andrew the Apostle Parish	*Bel-Air II, Makati City*	6:30 p.m.
Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat	*Mendiola, Manila*	8:30 p.m.

Her loving husband, **Eddie**, and daughter, **Eileen**, request the relatives, friends, and people whose lives she has touched to offer a prayer for her soul. Her family also conveys sincere appreciation and gratitude to all who sympathized, remember, offer mass and prayers and keep **Norma** alive in their memories and hearts.

*"Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord.
And let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen."*

CLASSIFIEDS

NFA offers drying, trucking aid to farmers

THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY IN PILI, Camarines Sur is offering its drying and trucking facilities at a very minimal fee to local farmers to get a better price for their harvest. The NFA Camarines Sur office has six units of mechanical driers which can dry 1,000 bags of palay for every 12-hour operation. These units are located at the Isarog Grains Center in Palestina, Pili. The NFA charges P30 per bag of 50 kilograms with 24 percent moisture content. Interested farmers and farmers' organizations may avail of the NFA's trucking services to haul their palay from the farm to either the NFA or any private traders. The service is open to everyone, even to those who do not sell their produce to the NFA. The NFA buys palay at P10 per kilogram with additional incentives amounting to P0.50 per kilogram to cover drying, delivery and cooperative development. The average prevailing price from private traders in the province is between P11 and P11.50 per kilogram. These prices apply to clean and dry stocks with 14 percent moisture content. Individual farmers who intend to sell their produce to the NFA may first secure a farmer's passbook from the NFA before delivering their stocks. Farmers who do not hold farmers' passbooks may be allowed to sell a maximum of 50 bags as initial delivery. For subsequent deliveries, however, a farmer's passbook will be required. For more information on NFA programs, the public may send their inquiries via the Text NFA Program through mobile number 0917-6210927.

Nueva Ecija palay farmers favor NFA

PALAY FARMERS IN NUEVA ECIJA STILL PREFER to sell their produce to the National Food Authority despite higher price offers from rice traders. This was revealed by NFA officials in Nueva Ecija after farmers took note of the food agency's additional incentives and the confidence that their stocks will be weighed properly if they sell them to NFA. NFA Nueva Ecija provincial manager Edelino Alejandro said that the NFA will continue to intensify its procurement operations in the province. Alejandro was at the agency's mobile buying station in barangay Agupalo West in Lupao recently to personally witness the agency's operations. Mobile procurement teams or mobile buying stations are set up in far-flung areas to serve farmers with limited transportation means. Meanwhile, regional director for region 3 Nicolas Crisostomo reported that the NFA has already procured around 76,3000 bags of palay in the region. The provinces of Bulacan and Nueva Ecija registered the highest procurement accomplishment with 28,800 and 24,4000 bags, respectively. From this volume, 35,000 bags were procured through the NFA's Farmers' Option to Buy Back (FOBB) program which allows farmers to retake the stocks they sold to the NFA within a 6-month period at minimum warehouse charges when prices at the commercial level become better. For more information on NFA programs, the public may send their inquiries via the Text NFA Program through mobile number 0917-6210927.

DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT
J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao City
Tel. # 221-9400

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1 The *Davao City Water District*, with the *Approved Budget for 2005* intends to apply the sum of ***One Million Five Hundred Ninety Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety Two Pesos & Forty Five Cents (P1,599,992.45)*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ***Various C.I Fittings, G.I Pipes & Fittings.*** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

2. The *Davao City Water District* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for:

Lot/Package No. 1 (Various C.I Fittings): **ABC: Php 1,024,500.00**

a)	130 pcs.	Mech'l Sleeve Type Coupling, 63mm
b)	305 pcs.	Mech'l Sleeve Type Coupling, 110mm
c)	60 pcs.	Mech'l Flange Adaptor, 225mm, (8")
d)	70 pcs.	Steel Flange Ring, 200mm, (8")
e)	50 pcs.	C.I Saddle Clamp, 4" x 2", for uPVC

Lot/Package No.2 (Various G.I Pipe & Fittings) **ABC: Php 575,492.45**

a)	300 pcs.	G.I Pipe, ½"x20', sch. 40
b)	5,000 pcs.	G.I nipple, ¾"x6", sch. 40
c)	3,043 pcs.	G.I nipple, ¾"x12", sch. 40
d)	15 pcs.	G.I Union Patent, ½"
e)	3,500 pcs.	G.I Plug, ¾"
f)	110 pcs.	G.I Bushing, 1"x¾"
g.)	50 pcs.	G.I Bushing, 2"x¾"
h)	15 pcs.	G.I Coupling Reducer, 2"x1"
i)	20 pcs.	G.I Coupling Reducer, 2"x¾"
j)	7,000 pcs.	G.I Elbow, ½" x 90 degrees
k)	7,000 pcs.	G.I Elbow, ¾" x 90 degrees"
l)	7,000 pcs.	G.I Straight Elbow, ½" x 90 degrees

Delivery of the GOODS is required by ***FEBRUARY 15, 2006***. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from *Davao City Water District* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. up to 5:00 p.m.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of non refundable fee in the amount of *P1,500.00/package*. The method of payment will be on Cash Basis. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

6. The *Davao City Water District* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***JANUARY 4, 2006 at 9:00 o'clock a.m. at DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City.***

7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before ***JANUARY 17, 2006 at 9:00 o'clock a.m.*** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of *cash or Manager's check* and in the amount of ***P10,245.00 for LOT/PACKAGE I*** and ***P5,754.90 for LOT/PACKAGE II.*** Late Bids shall not be accepted.

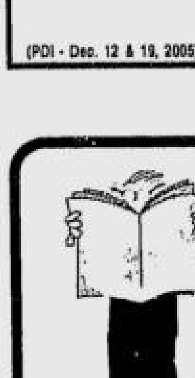
8. Bid opening shall be on ***JANUARY 17, 2006 at 9:00 o'clock a.m.*** at ***DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City***. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

9. The *Davao City Water District* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Davao City Water District
BAC-A
J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City
Tel. No. : 221-9400 (6000)
E-mail add : dcwd@davao-water.gov.ph
Fax No. : 224-5392
Website : www.davao-water.gov.ph

(Sgd.) VIRGINIA S. MARIMON
BAC-A Chairperson

(PDI - Dec. 12 & 19, 2005)



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Department of National Defense

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(Bidding for the Phase 1 Upgrade of Two (2) Britten Norman Islander-2A Fixed Wing Aircraft of the Philippine Navy)

1. The Department of National Defense (Armed Forces of the Philippines), through the General Appropriation Act and the AFP Modernization Program Act Trust Fund, intends to apply the sum of ***SEVENTY TWO MILLION PESOS (PHP 72,000,000.00)*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **Phase 1 Upgrade Project of Two (2) Britten Norman Islander-2A Fixed Wing Aircraft (BNI-2A)** of the Philippine Navy. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

2. The DND/AFP now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the **PHASE 1 UPGRADE OF TWO (2) BRITTEN NORMAN ISLANDER-2A FIXED WING AIRCRAFT (BNI-2A)** of the Philippine Navy. The expected contract duration is **360 CALENDAR DAYS** as per Bidding Documents. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the DND Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address specified below from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of ***Eight Thousand Pesos (Php 8,000.00)*** **starting on December 9, 2005**. The method of payment will be in cash or thru cashier's check. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

6. **Bid opening shall be on February 2, 2006 at 9:00 a.m.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at *Silid Panday Pira, 1st Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.*

7. The DND/AFP will hold a **Pre-bid Conference** open to all interested parties on **December 21, 2005 at 9 a.m.** at the *Silid Panday Pira, 1st Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.*

8. **Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted to the address below on or before - 9:00 a.m. of February 2, 2005.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the forms and corresponding amount allowed under RA 9184 and its IRR-A. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

9. To facilitate eligibility checking, manufacturers and/or prospective bidders who wish to participate in the public bidding are required to apply for registration with the DND BAC, through the DND BAC Secretariat, at least fifteen (15) days before the scheduled submission and opening of bids for the procurement of the projects they wish to participate in, pursuant to DND BAC Cir 01-2005 (download available at the website specified below) dtd 12 May 2005.

10. The DND/AFP reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

DND BAC Extension Secretariat
Armed Forces of the Philippines
Modernization Program Management Office
3/F Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo
Quezon City, Philippines 1110
Tel. No: (632) 911-6001 local 6592
Telefax No: (632) 912-9541 / 421-2327
Email: cmtdmpmo@yahoo.com
Website: www.info.com.ph/~afpmod

(Sgd.) USEC JOSE F SANTOS
Chairman, DND BAC

(PDI - Dec. 12 & 19, 2005)

BUSINESS

END-YEAR PROJECTION

LRTA sees ₱2B in '05 losses

Rail agency expects no gain until fares are increased

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY EXPECTS ITS LOSSES TO hit about P2 billion this year against the P1.3 billion it posted in 2004 due to its inability to generate enough revenue to cover its expenses, its top official said.

LRTA administrator Mel Robles said the government had been subsidizing the fare of each passenger by more than P40.

"Our net loss is almost doubling this year to about P2 billion because we have not raised our fares," said Robles.

Next year, the agency expects losses will continue to mount unless Malacañang allows LRTA to increase fares.

LRTA and Metro Rail Transit 3 have been asking Malacañang since March 2003 to approve a P10 increase in fares. The increase is not enough to cover the rise in costs of fuel, power and overhead, but it will help the rail administrators to cope.

Robles said the bulk of the losses would be booked during the fourth quarter when the bills come in. Due to some form of deferred payment scheme, losses stood only at P406 million as of August, according to the LRTA chief.

"But by the end of the year, we expect about P2 billion in losses," he said.

The LRTA said the government subsidy to its passengers would amount to P10.9 billion this year.

In the first quarter, the break-even fare was P23.05. But the LRTA is collecting only a minimum fare of P12 for the two lines. The price of fuel had gone up by almost half since the last time the LRTA raised its fees. Power accounts for more than 30 percent of its operating costs.

Debt service too, is eating up revenue.

The LRTA said the average debt service of between P3.3 billion and P3.4 billion this year would include maturing principal obligations. Borrowing comprises the bulk of the LRTA's annual funding requirement.

The 18 stations of Line 1 stretches from Monumento to Baclaran, while the 11 stations of Line 2 runs from Santolan in Pasig to Recto in Manila. An average of 320,000 passengers take Line 1 daily, while about 140,000 use Line 2 each day.

LRTA said the fare adjustment already approved by the board, as well as the inter-agency fare council last year, would raise the cost of traveling the entire stretch to P25.

Rail ridership has been increasing in step with the growth in population.

Rule changes seen to boost auto industry

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BOARD OF INVESTMENTS WILL START making changes in the implementing rules of the Automotive Export Program to boost the development of the local auto industry.

Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez said the BOI meant to encourage more investments in the sector by allowing exporters to take advantage of the benefits of combined export categories, as spelled out in Executive Order No. 312 of 2004.

According to the law, amendments to the rules may only be introduced by the Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry, Hernandez said.

EO 312 provides incentives for exports of completely built units in four categories:

- Regular CBU exports, where participants in the program must directly export 10,000 units a year at a minimum freight-on-board value of $5,000 a unit;
- Developmental CBU export, under which vehicles should be of new basic models designed to be produced mainly in the country; exporters must ship out at least 5,000 units yearly at a minimum value of $5,000 a unit;
- Niche CBU exports, where vehicles are exclusively made in the country, with yearly exports of at least 2,500 units at $10,000 each; and
- High-value, low-volume CBU exports, where exporters must ship out yearly at least 2,500 units of high-end vehicles at a minimum value of $20,000 a unit.

Hernandez said the revisions made the rules more flexible, such that a program participant may qualify for incentives once the combined minimum number of units exported or the minimum value for any two categories are met.

"For instance, a participant that opts for a combination of regular and developmental exports must ship out at least 15,000 units of the vehicles a year, regardless of minimum value, or a total value of $75 million regardless of minimum volume," he explained.

However, Hernandez said that as a safeguard, the BOI would keep the schedule of export credits for each unit.

Under EO 312, a program participant earns credits for each unit exported. The credits may be used to offset the cost of CBUs that will be imported.

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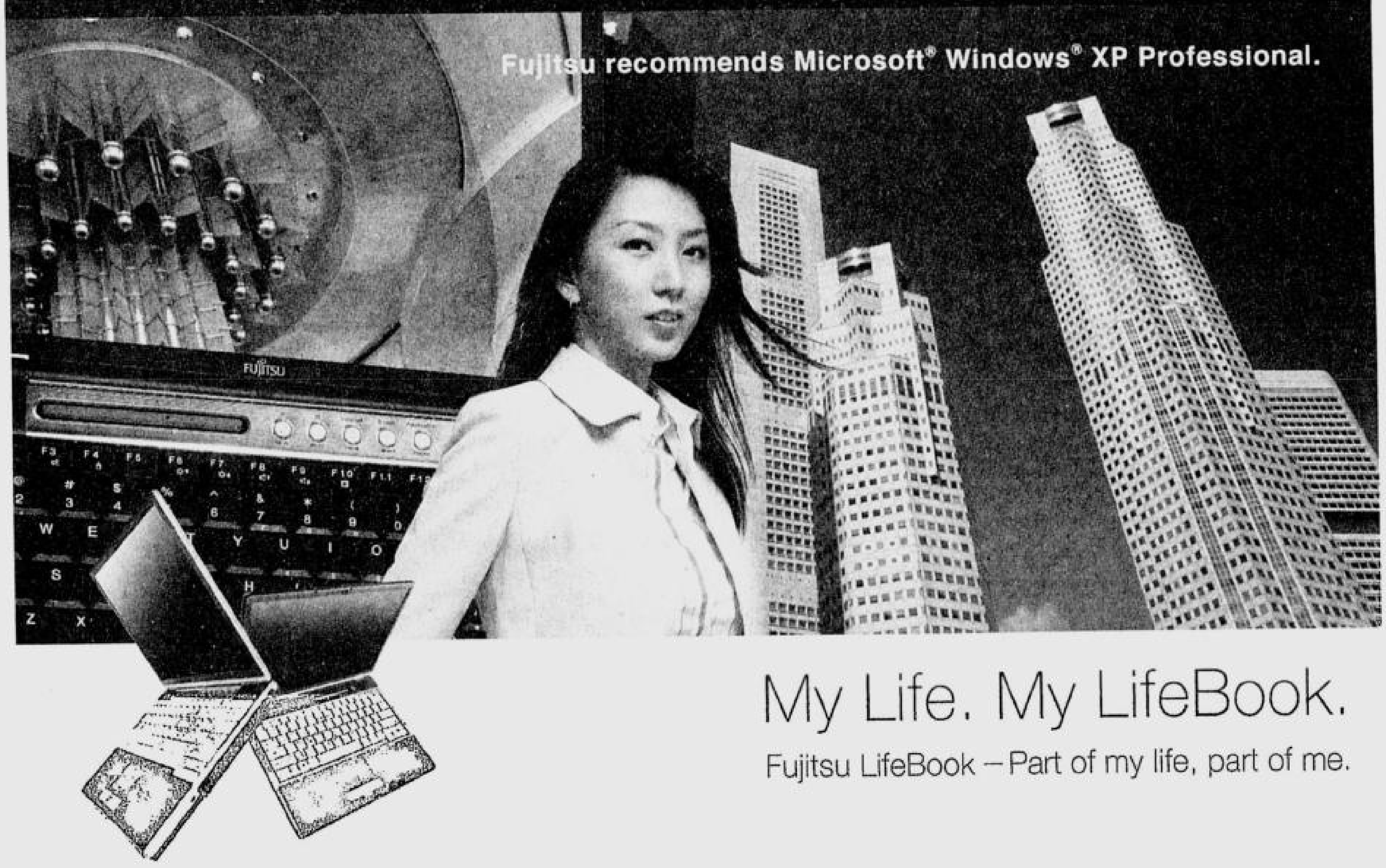
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E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph

Business Features Editor
Margie Quimpo-Espino

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Is crony capitalism easing its way back?

DBP loan to bankroll Campos-Cojuangco takeover of Del Monte raises eyebrows

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE STATE-OWNED Development of the Philippines (DBP) is making no apologies for helping Marcos crony, San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, and a son of another Marcos crony, Joselito Campos Jr., in the bitter takeover battle for Del Monte Pacific Ltd.

"It's a good deal. The business could have gone to another bank," says DBP president and chief executive officer Rey David.

DBP is part of the bank syndicate formed to bankroll the purchase by NutriAsia Pacific Ltd., the vehicle formed by San Miguel and Campos, of Del Monte.

The other members include HSBC Holdings and Banco De Oro Universal Bank.

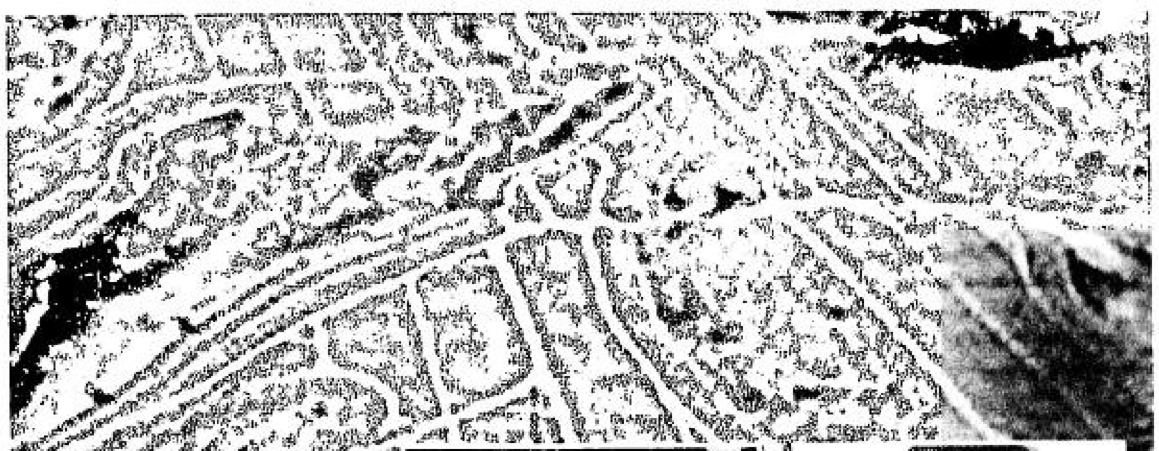
The syndicate will provide bridge financing to the Cojuangco-Campos venture but a confidentiality provision prevents the participants from disclosing the extent of their exposure and other details.

The total value of the deal was estimated to be $420 million.

A banking source claimed that DBP would take a sizable piece of the loan and that NutriAsia's owners were granted better-than-market terms.

"From a policy perspective, the loan leaves a bad taste in the mouth," the source comments.

DBP's financial muscle in the NutriAsia loan was seen as crucial to the successful bid of Cojuangco and Campos for Del Monte and thwarted the takeover bid of the First Pacific, the investment arm of the Salim Group of Indonesia.



AERIAL view of Del Monte's vast pineapple plantation in Mindanao

COJUANGCO

CAMPOS

Campos, who built a fortune outside of the family-owned United Laboratories by dominating the condiments business (he owns UFC and has the rights to produce Heinz catsup in the country), had to ally himself with Cojuangco because he could not afford on his own the hefty purchase price for Del Monte.

The First Pacific group had offered 38.18 cents per share for Del Monte which was topped by the 38.62 cents a share placed by Cojuangco-Campos to the Lorenzo family (who exercised its pre-emptive right to match First Pacific's offer and subsequently sold its entire shareholdings to NutriAsia).

Nothing wrong

David, the former vice chair of the Export and Industry Bank, found nothing unusual about the loan to Cojuangco and Campos considering that it fell within its mandate as a universal bank.

The source notes that it was unfair for a state-owned bank to play a role in a free market enterprise because it unduly gave an edge to the party it granted a loan.

The source says the deal smacks of cronyism considering the close ties of the beneficiaries to the administration—Cojuangco is chair of the opposition party National People's Coalition, which is a key ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Lakas, while the Campos family has been one of this administration's staunchest supporters in the business community.

"If banks are falling over themselves to lend to Cojuangco and Campos, how come DBP has to step up the plate and lend to them?" the source asks.

But an administration official defended DBP's decision to lend a hand to Cojuangco and Campos as part of its patriotic duty to keep Del Monte operations in the Philippines.

The official says there were concerns raised on the possibility that First Pacific would shift the bulk of the Del Monte operations to Sulawesi (which is in the same equatorial zone as Mindanao) and make it part of Indonesia.

Extensive portfolio

Del Monte Pacific owns Del Monte brand rights for the Philippines and the Indian sub-continent. The company also has long-term contracts to supply canned pineapple, juice and mixed tropical fruits to North America, Europe and the Far East.

The Del Monte Pacific protfolio includes canned fruits, a variety of tomato-based sauces, fruit salad cream, pasta, condiments, juice drinks and concentrates, and one of the largest and most efficient plantations.

In the Philippines, Del Monte Products are sold under the Del Monte and Today's brands.

It has a strong market position in the Philippines with more than an 85-percent market share in pineapple solids and about 80 percent in mixed fruits and tomato sauce.

Beyond mandate?

Critics also point out that the loan to the big boys Cojuangco and Campos specifically to take over a giant corporation was way beyond its primary mandate of lending to medium and long-term financing needs of enterprises particularly small and medium-scale industries in the the countryside.

DBP has been under fire for its failure to provide financing to the President's ambitious development programs, such as the P30 billion Sustainable Logistics Development Program (SLDP) meant to modernize the processing, storage, delivery and the distribution of grain harvest and perishable goods of traders and farmers from Mindanao and Luzon.

In two years that the President has been touting the SLDP, DBP has only lent to 11 projects totaling P1.63 billion.

An official of a leading corporation in its industry complains that the DBP had been favoring loans to corporations that could have easily borrowed from other private banks.

The official points out that while they have complied with all the requirements of DBP, the bank has yet to release its multi-million peso loan after a year of processing.

'DBP's bias for the big, takeover deal may be evident in its plan to raise between $300 million and $400 million to complete the government's takeover of Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 (Naia-3) from the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco), whose contract to build and operate the world class terminal was voided by the Supreme Court two years ago.

Get to know the chair of the world's local bank

By Doris C. Dumlao

THIS TOP BANKER WHO was once a legislator and state policy advisor in Hong Kong was afflicted with polio since infancy, but it didn't stop him from promoting social causes in his youth, climbing the corporate ladder and doing public service.

VINCENT Cheng is the first non-British head of HSBC.

Vincent Cheng drew a lot of interest since he was the first Chinese—the first Asian in fact—to be appointed early this year as chair of British banking giant HSBC Ltd.

Recently in Manila to grace the bank's 130th anniversary in this market, Cheng talks to INQUIRER about his beginnings, his aspirations and his upbeat assessment on the Philippines. This good-natured man, whom the local staff speaks so highly of, attests that HSBC is a great institution and is proud of working for "the world's local bank" since the last 28 years.

Among his key goals at the helm of HSBÇ is to ensure that it will be a bank of great integrity and honesty—one which provides good commercial services while fulfilling public social responsibility.

"We put a high priority on corporate social responsibility. Banking is not just to help the business but the community as well. We are an international organization so we have no problem about race or gender.

"Everybody is recognized according to one's capabilities," Cheng says.

Being in charge of operations across the Asia-Pacific, Cheng not only works to keep the bank ahead of competition. He is also the de facto ambassador of goodwill, a role that fits him like a glove given his very high esteem for the bank.

"One of my roles is to represent the institution, making sure that we have very good relations because we are guests in our host countries and we have to make sure that we're welcome to stay," he notes.

And it is not a walk in the park to run HSBC—a global organization governed by 470 regulators.

"What I want to do really is to make HSBC, which I think we're already there, a bank that our shareholders, employees and communities will always be proud of: An institution everyone wants to be associated with," he says.

Typical day

Cheng starts his day early, doing office work and then entertaining customers and guests and goes home by 10:30 or 11 in the evening. As much as possible, he stays home with the family during the weekends and keeps fit by dipping in the pool in the morning.

"With polio, swimming is the only exercise that won't hurt my legs too much," he says.

He has two daughters who are now in college in Hong Kong, one taking up a business course and another taking up medicine. He jokes that because he's a polio victim, his body is a perfect candidate for medical research and his daughter shouldn't cremate him when he dies so that every bit of his body could be used for scientific purposes.

His job takes him away from his family most of the time, traveling across the globe and working till late at night, but he's not complaining.

"If I had a second life, I'd do it again," he says.

This banker grew up in a working class neighborhood in Hong Kong, studied there and took up post-graduate studies in New Zealand.

Career path

When Cheng first joined the Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp. in 1978, it was but a regional bank breaking into the American market. Now, he is at the helm of an organization with 255,000 people across 277 markets.

He was an economist by training and became the bank's chief economist in 1986. Afterwards, he was invited to work for the Hong

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IN LINE WITH THE 50th ANniversary of Filinvest Development Corp. and the 10th year of Filinvest Corporate City, the Gotianun-owned company held "Filinvest Run For A Child" last Dec. 3.

Some 1,600 participants led by the Gotianun family, Muntinlupa Representative Ruffy Biazon, local government officials, employees and officers of Filinvest and Festival Supermall attended this charity fun run organized by the Filinvest Group of Companies.

What's in a flag?

MAPping THE FUTURE

Antonio T. Hernandez

EVERY NATIONAL FLAG DAY QUICKLY PASSes us by rather stoically and languidly. We will soon celebrate our 107th year of independence. The National Flag Day comes sans the loftiness and grandness of its symbolism and significance. Just where have all its warmth and vigor gone? The ardor and effervescence of that indomitable spirit which is its embodiment? Can we still connect with that spirit which has given us our heroes at the turn of the 19th century? Which brought us our FLAG—our rallying point—symbolic of our heritage, our nationality and artistry?

Have we, like other societies, thought of our flag prominently displayed in every home, in every community to celebrate the occasion ... to keep the exploits of the past alive, and the embers of patriotism burning in our hearts?

If not, what then is its place in our own clime and psyche?

The tradition of flags as any encyclopedia would indicate, "has been traced to ancient Egypt and Assyria, where sacred objects mounted on poles served as rallying points in battle or as signs of royal authority; and to India and China where cloth flags were similarly used many centuries before the Christian era." Islamic invaders are known to have introduced the flag to Europe.

"Since World War II, interest in flags has expanded beyond their creation and use. Political scientists, historians, sociologists and others recognize them as artifacts expressive of the cultures of certain times and places."

Says the Britannica, "... in many cases, the colors of national flags, are those of coats of arms of royal families; in other case, colors singly or in combinations, imply a political or religious ideology, an agricultural or maritime tradition or other national characters. Figures also have conventional connotations: Crosses identify many Christian countries, and crescents designate Islamic nations; the hammer and sickle proclaim communism; stars emphasize sovereignty" and so on.

In the Philippine context, our flag have had its own evolution. From the Katipunan's KKK variants, to Llanera's skull and cross-bones, to the present-day tri-color plus the sun (with eight rays) and a three-star-design depicting Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao and the first eight provinces to defy foreign domination.

Great is the drama of the Filipino flag's coming into being, dyed by the blood of our forebears; and thus, the respect we accord to its symbolism. Even as we relax in the theaters for instance. Before the show or the movie begins, we stand up to salute the flag while the national anthem is at play. And more so in schools and at the work place with our Monday morning flag raising ritual.

But, if one may ask: Is it really enough respect that we come around and salute the flag? That we look up to it with our hands on our breasts? With fervor singing? That we go through the motions to satisfy the ritual by force of habit?

More substantive than just the mechanical outward gesture of honoring the flag is, I must say, the effort of one and all to become truly deserving of the flag for what it is ... and making that flag even more intrinsically respectable.

And we can best reflect its intrinsic respectability if, by our own ways, it begins to represent not just a glorious past but a contemporary society just as respectable if not more; if it begins to represent a people known to stand up for what is honorable; employers of men who deal with their human resource equitably; a bureaucracy that acts for the good of the greatest number and spends tax revenues prudently; a citizenry who will abide by the law and will not compromise with wrong; leaders who do not believe that cheating and duplicity are the preferred qualities for success; individuals who will find time for the disadvantaged—who know not only how to honestly earn a living, but how to live and to share.

When we have these attributes in us, in our people, isn't it then and only then that we can say that we do deserve that symbol of a people? Making it even more substantively respectable? And only then that Flag begins to proudly command and earn the tribute of all?

But certainly, to be what people should ideally be is never an easy proposition. It has in fact been said that: "it is much easier to die for one's country than to live for one's country; much easier to die for the flag than to live for the flag, pay taxes and count votes correctly; easier to envoke your rights than to meet your obligations—civic or religious."

If we can thus muster the courage and pay the price to reverse the scenario, then we would have achieved what those who came ahead of us must have dreamed but did not live to see its realization.

Happily though, HOPE springs eternal. Tomorrow is another day. If we begin working on it today, our vision of tomorrow may yet be a reality for the country, for its people and its flag!

(The author is a Management and Development Finance Consultant, National Director PICPA, and former SVP of Land Bank. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph.)

Get to know the chair of world's local bank

From page B2-1

Kong government as a full-time advisor when the former British crown colony created a central policy unit that included a handful of private sector technocrats including himself.

Cheng also became a member of the legislature and a member of the HK executive council which is similar to a Cabinet post. As a legislator, he was among those who scrutinized proposed bills and initiated policy ideas which had to be drafted by legal experts.

"At that time, Hong Kong was still a colony and one-third of the seats was appointed, not elected. I was one of those. I wasn't a politician," he stresses.

He rejoined HSBC in 1992 and became the bank's chief financial officer in 1994. He took up the post of general manager in June 1995 and then became executive director in November that same year. He was appointed vice-chair and CEO of HSBC subsidiary Hang Seng Bank in 1998, before being named as the new chair of HSBC last May.

"I've been very lucky because whenever I get to transfer to a new position, I always get strong support from constituents. I never really had a major problem. We have a good system in HSBC and they won't just drop you into a new job without support," Cheng said.

When he was CFO, for instance, he had to do an accountant's job even if he was an economist by training. But HSBC backed him up with a deputy who was an accountant, from whom he learned a lot and vice versa.

"The real challenge is really the new products coming into the market, particularly the structured products. These are the things that are really quite competitive," Cheng says.

"My role today is more strategic. I see myself captain of the team pushing the team forward."

Speaking about the Philippines, Cheng is very bullish and predicted that the country would soar to greater heights if Filipinos stopped criticizing themselves too much.

"When I look at what's happening here—you have people who are highly educated, English-speaking and have the confidence of the international community. You have the entrepreneurs, you have the professionals and you also have the capital. You have huge remittances coming in. The economy should already have the ingredients of success."

CHENG (right) celebrates HSBC's 130 years in RP with HSBC Philippines CEO Warner Manning.

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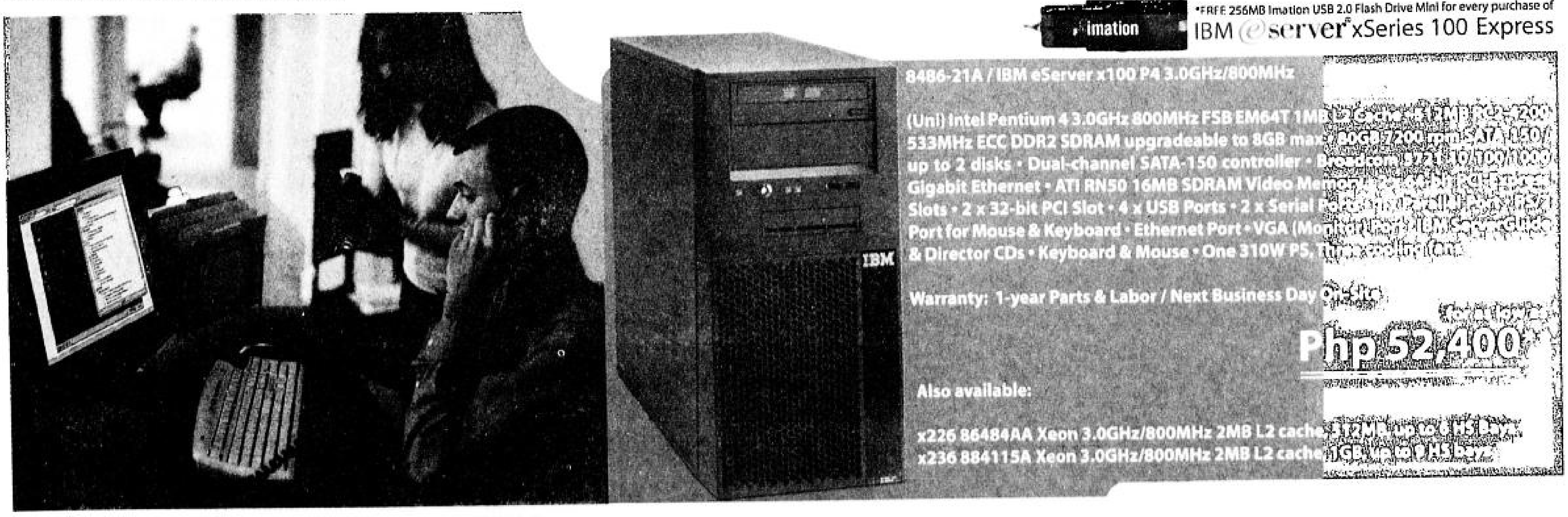

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Livelihood opportunities through phone financing

COUNTRY LIVING IS TAKING ON a whole new meaning as telecommunications giant Globe Telecom steps up its efforts to integrate technology into the rural landscape.

Globe sows the numerous advantages, not to mention the income generating capacity, of communications technology for agriculture to reap. With its partnership with the Rural Bank Association of the Philippines (RBAP), Globe offers affordable phone kits and better value SIMS to empower consumers based in rural areas across the Philippines.

The Globe-rural bank tie-up provides farmers, fisherfolk, countryside workers, and small enterprise proprietors with a phonekit loan that offers them the chance to get brand new Globe Prepaid Phonekits from participating rural banks. With this financing scheme, borrowers have the option to decide on a payment schedule that suits them. The loan can be paid on a weekly or monthly basis within a six-month period, following standard rural banks' interest rates. Each individual also receives free load credits for every phone he or she gets and as much as P300 worth of free load after successfully completing the loan payments.

Subscribers have three phone units to choose from including the Motorola C117, Nokia 1100 and the Sony Ericsson T290i, bundled with one of the Globe Prepaid SIM: TM, Globe Handyphone and Autoload Max Retailer SIM, that allows the subscribers to become an instant Globe load retailer.

With the AMAX Phonekit, the retailer can automatically reload Globe and Touch Mobile prepaid credits from one's cell phone and earn 14 percent for every load they are able to sell. Aside from these, AMAX also provides "wallets" to easily account for and differentiate personal calls and text from the retailer's stored loads for selling. The kit was designed with the objective of helping these retailers generate extra earnings to augment their income.

In addition, Globe made available value added services such as "Ulat Panahon" and "Presyo Text" for Globe and TM subscribers. "Ulat Panahon" provides access to weather forecasts on land and sea conditions, a big help for fishermen and other agri-folks in equipping them with useful information in preparation for their business. "Presyo Text," on the other hand, gives up-to-date information on prices of basic goods at Department of Agriculture-recommended wet markets. Both are important factors that can affect the agricultural sector's main source of livelihood.

The financing program aims to equip the countryside with the speed and convenience afforded by mobile phone ownership, to satisfactorily address the consumers' personal needs, improve the ways they conduct business and encourage the growth of micro-entrepreneurship in these areas. Globe Telecom aims to ensure that the technology's vast potential would be accessible to more Filipinos nationwide.

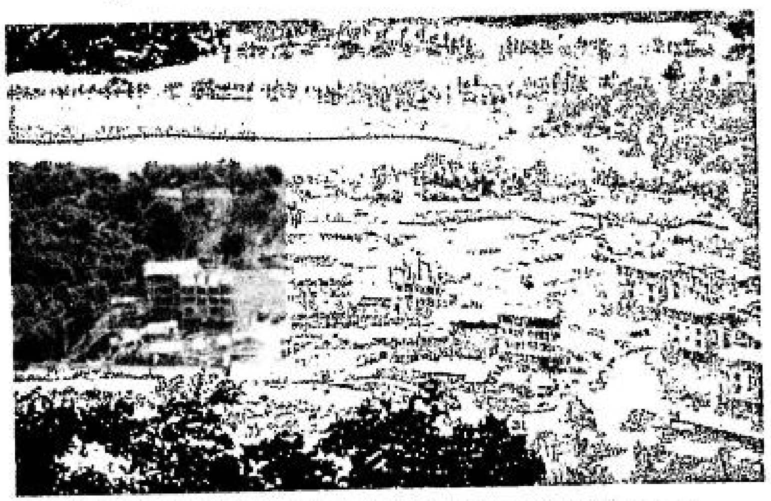
SM group starts new development in Tagaytay

HIGHLANDS PRIME INC. (HPI), the publicly listed high-end leisure property development company of the SM Group, has announced the start of the construction of the nine-hectare low-rise condominium development within Tagaytay Highlands and Midlands complex in Tagaytay City, called The Horizon.

Construction of The Horizon's first six (out of 12) buildings are set to be finished by the second quarter of next year. All Horizon units come in four bedrooms with an approximate floor area of 143 square meters.

To date, 20 percent of The Horizon has been sold and HPI is expecting sales to intensify after the opening of the model units. The firm's maiden project is The Woodridge at Tagaytay Highlands. The last of its elegant stone and timber condominium buildings, the Sequoia, is now sold out and the units will be turned over to its owners by January.

Planned with family-oriented golfers in mind, The Horizon will have several golfing and leisure amenities. Golf cart owners will enjoy the convenience of driving along a specially designed golf cart path leading directly to the Midlands Golf Club and the 18-hole Tagaytay Midlands championship course. Golfers may also practice at the development's own putting green and store their golf bags in conveniently located hallway lockers. In keeping with the development's theme, the 12 zen-inspired buildings are named after famous golf courses.



GOLFER'S HAVEN. The Horizon site overlooking the Tagaytay Midlands Golf Course with its six nearly completed buildings.

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Corporate Securities Info

Raul Palabrica

AS THE CHRISTMAS AND NEW Year celebrations draw near, the backroom staff of the country's business establishments are busy with the traditional yearend closing of their books.

This early, the accountants are already collating their companies' production and sales data to find out, at least preliminarily, if the year that is about to end has been financially rewarding.

For the more generous business executives (bless their soul!), the initial figures will enable them to decide whether to give their employees something extra on top of the compulsory 13th-month pay and company-initiated Christmas bonus.

In theory, getting the financial facts and figures should be easy. With the advances in technology, the information can be downloaded from the computer at a flick of a finger.

But even if the data is readily available, the number crunchers have to verify the figures, make the proper accounting treatment and report the results of their evaluation to management.

To the relief of the members of the accounting profession, Bill Gates has not yet invented the software or technology that would make their craft obsolete.

Accounting reports

By April next year, the audited financial statements of corporations for the period ending Dec. 31, 2005 should be prepared in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), also known as International Accounting Standards.

If they do not conform to the new rules, the regulatory agencies that require the submission of those forms—the Securities and Exchange Commission and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas—will treat them as non-compliant with their respective reportorial regulations.

Failure to file the right kind of reports could subject the parties concerned to hefty fines.

Although the monetary sanctions may be peanuts for some companies, it's the idea of being considered delinquent in the submission of reports (and which forms part of official records) that makes the blood pressure of reputable business managers rise.

Woe to the accountant or accounting firm responsible for the wrong submission. The error will rear its ugly head when the contract for their services comes up for renewal.

Treatment

There is no singular or monolithic way of resolving accounting issues. It's no different from the legal profession where the facts and circumstances of a case influence the manner it should be handled.

Except for fundamental accounting principles, the interpretation or application of some accounting rules vary depending on the nature of the business activity involved.

Thus, the accounting treatment of the assets and liabilities of a cell phone operator is different from that of a company engaged in the restaurant business.

Although pre-need and insurance companies are organized to give financial assistance to their clients for future contingencies, the entries in their books do not follow the same accounting guidelines.

It remains to be seen whether the accounting profession can smoothly leave the comfort zone of the erstwhile "generally accepted accounting principles" in favor of the globally oriented IFRS.

Last minute

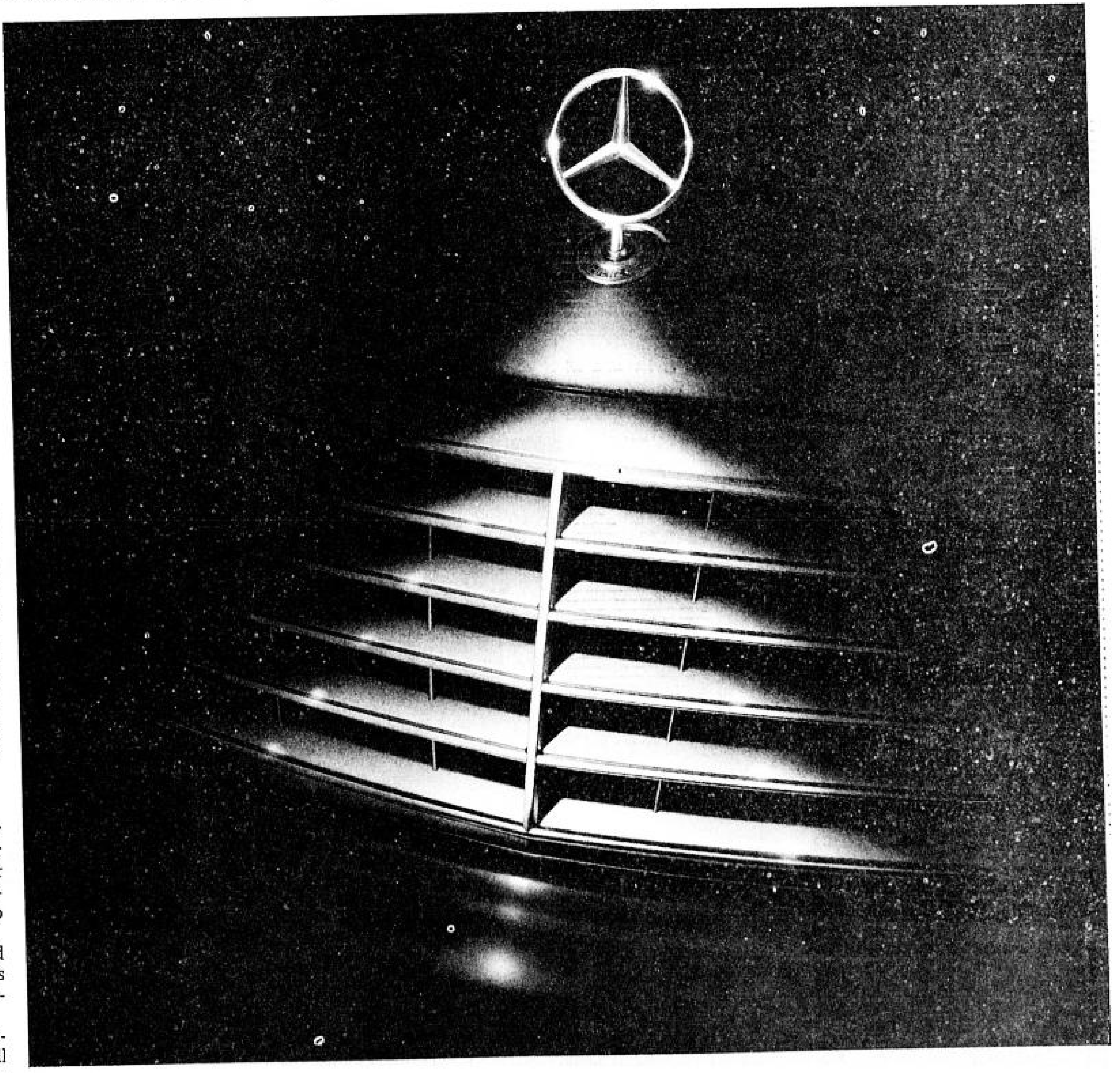
This is also the time of the year when the personnel responsible for liaison work with government agencies check if any of the company's regulatory approvals needs to be renewed before the year's end.

Some managers consider it bad feng shui to start the New Year's business with expired or cancelled permits or licenses.

For heavily regulated companies, they have to make sure all required filings for the year have been complied with. More so if the reports have to be under oath.

The authority of notary publics to authenticate documents, which is usually good for two years, expires on the last day of the year.

If the company's favorite notary public (read: one who does not ask embarrassing questions or charges exorbitant fees) is unable to stamp his notarial seal on the report before his commission lapses, looking for a suitable replacement could pose some problems. *(For comments or questions concerning this article, you may write to <rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph>.)*



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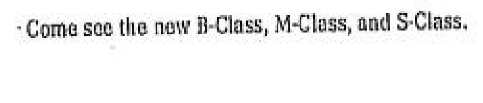

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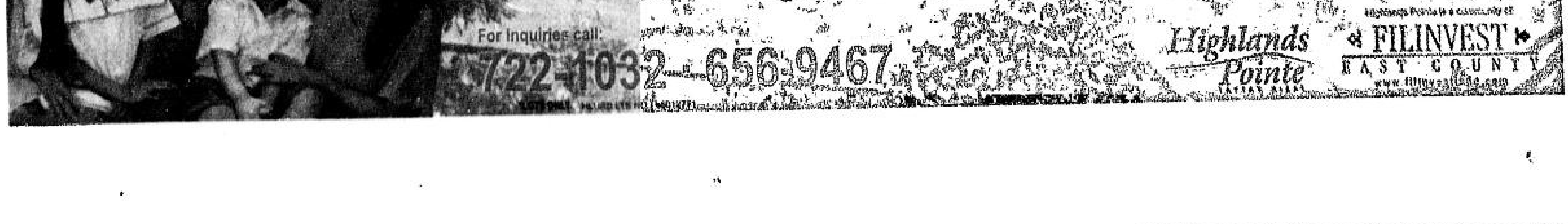

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FILINVEST EAST COUNTY

'There is always room for one more mall'

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

EVERYBODY SEEMS ABUZZ about shopping at 168 in Divisoria or the *tiangges* for Christmas gifts than in the malls, but mall owners are undeterred.

In fact, expect more malls to sprout in the country in the next few years in anticipation of bigger consumer demand and a rise in Filipinos' spending power due largely to increasing remittances of Pinoys working abroad.

Business Monday talked to three of the leading mall developers and asked why they remained optimistic in retail.

SM Supermalls

The SM group, the undisputed leader in mall development, is not about to give part of its market share to its competitors and opened three malls this year—SM City, San Lazaro, SM Supercenter in Valenzuela and SM Supercenter in Molino, Cavite, a province north of Metro Manila.

Millie Dizon of the SM group says that San Lazaro was a good site as it sits on the former Manila Jockey Club. It is both historic and bustling location.

The Valenzuela mall, on the other hand, serves markets in the north metro area while the Molino mall targets the rapidly developing province of Cavite.

"Cavite has become a favored location of many industrial and commercial businesses, as well as residential subdivisions," she says.

To date, Cavite has 21 industrial parks spread over 20 municipalities, creating pockets of activities that will support a mall.

Dizon says, however, that because of increased competition and more discriminating consumers, developers have to give the market something extra.

The SM group, for instance, has modified the architecture of its malls to depart from the usual "box" look of the earlier malls.

"Our new malls have more color and are more "out of the box" in terms of design. We try to study the communities and the market in each of the new areas, making these a basis for merchandise, tenant mix, etc.," Dizon says.

She adds malls have become part of the lives of many Filipinos.

The Ayala group

The Greenbelt mall of the Ayala group has earned accolades here and abroad for being the best designed in the country, with its melding of modern structure with extensive landscaping and environmental management.

Rowena M. Tomeldan, vice president of the commercial centers group of Ayala Land Inc., says Greenbelt will continue to be developed.

Greenbelt 5 is the last phase of the program to develop Greenbelt in the Makati central business district into the country's sole premier lifestyle center.

It is scheduled to open by 2007.

Greenbelt is just one of the major mall retail developments that the Ayala group has outlined over the next few years.

Another project is the North Triangle Commercial Center Project at the corner of Edsa and North Avenue in Quezon City.

Approximately 200,000 square meters, Tomeldan says the project will combine the strengths of a traditional shopping center with new concepts and specialized lifestyle zones.

Another major project is the development of the retail feature of Serendra in Fort Bonifacio, scheduled to open by the third quarter of next year.

This is part of the entire development of the Bonifacio Global City where the Ayala group recently bought into.

The last major project is the expansion of the Ayala Center in Cebu, the biggest urban center outside Metro Manila. Development will start by the middle of next year to be completed by early 2008.

Tomeldan says the group was optimistic about the retail sector because it is highly dynamic and continues to adapt to the changing needs of customers, thus, ensuring sustainability.

The Ayala group also relies heavily on market research to determine the potential volume of customers. The group looks into the behavior and preferences of the market to tailor fit the development.

Data from the National Statistical Coordination Board showed that the retail's sector contribution to the gross national project went up to 18 percent last year from 11 percent in 2003. This is expected to go up this year and in the next few years.

"There is always room for one more (mall). The challenge lies in surpassing customers' expectations every time we build a mall. We try to give them world class malls yet sensitive to their needs," she says.

Ortigas and Co.

The Ortigas group is known in the retail sector for the Greenhills Shopping Center in San Juan, considered the tiangge or bazaar capital of the Philippines.

Ortigas is still in the middle of redeveloping the shopping center to keep it in step with the changing preferences of the market.

But in September this year, the Ortigas group scored another coup with the opening of the Tiendesitas (little stores) in another Ortigas property in Quezon City.

Rex C. Drilon II, chief operating officer of Ortigas and Co., the owner and developer of the Greenhills and Tiendesitas projects, says the group put up Tiendesitas to give the market a good place to get the best of Filipino products.

Drilon says Filipino products, from food to clothes to crafts, used to be relegated to corners of big malls or were only available during festivals or special occasions.

With Tiendesitas, he says Filipinos and foreigners would get Filipino products the whole year through.

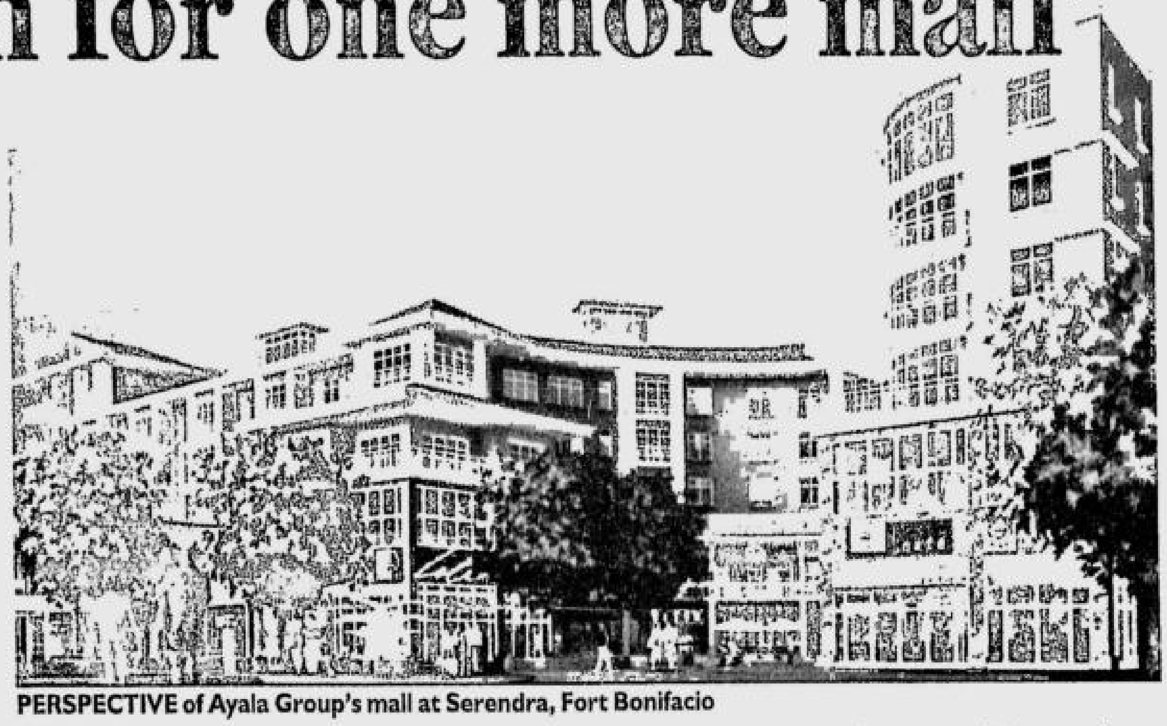
"We want it to be a destination place, especially for *balikbayans* and foreigners looking for souvenirs or a taste of what the Philippines has to offer," he says.

Tiendesitas is an eye catcher with its pavilions made in typical Filipino bahay kubo design, with roofs covered with grass.

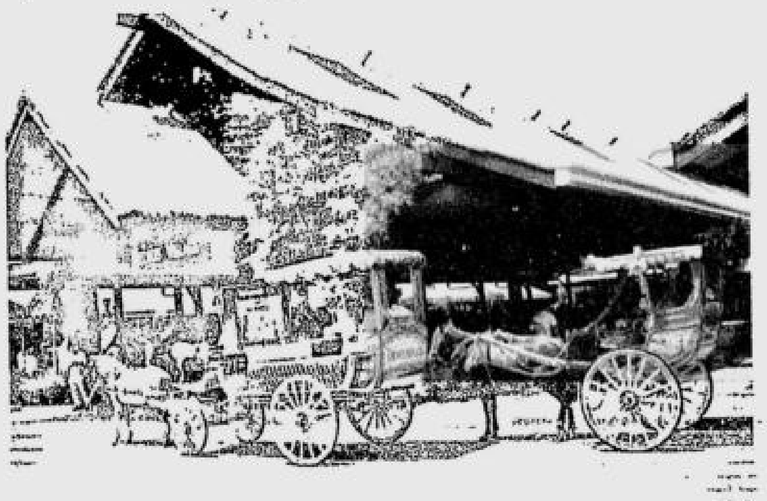
There are separate pavilions for fashion, food, antiques and garden and pet supplies.

Drilon says the response of the market has been overwhelming and buoys their confidence that the market does appreciate Filipino-made products.

"Here, it's the best of Pinoy, every day," he says.



PERSPECTIVE of Ayala Group's mall at Serendra, Fort Bonifacio



AT THE TIENDESITAS

Eletronic firm's semicon business in new structure

ROYAL PHILIPS ELECTRONICS announced it will start the process to create a separate legal structure for its semiconductors business, giving Philips flexibility to pursue strategic options for further strengthening the longer-term performance of these activities.

In early 2005 Philips introduced a business renewal program to improve the semiconductor division's competitiveness and bring profitability through the cycle to between 5 and 15 percent, as well as to increase market share in the semiconductors division's four core businesses of mobile and personal, home, automotive and identification, and multi- market semiconductors.

"While we are pleased with the progress of the business renewal program, we see opportunities to further strengthen the activities and maximize shareholder value, with the step we announced today, in an industry where scale matters," Gerard Kleisterlee, president and CEO of Royal Philips Electronics, stated.

Building your aptitudes

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

IN MY IMMATURE DAYS OF leadership, I used to think there was only one way to lead.

Then I read a classic book by Florence Littauer called "Personality Plus," and it opened my eyes to the way different temperaments and different personalities create different leadership aptitudes.

Over the years, I've identified four basic aptitudes of leadership—the directional leader, the strategic leader, the team-building leader and the operational leader.

Each consists of identifiable strengths and weakness.

So the goal, it might seem, is to master all four aptitudes of leadership.

In reality, however, no one person scores high on all four aptitudes. Most people are dominant in one and have a secondary strength in another. That's because the four aptitudes don't fit the same type of temperament and personality.

And since no leader possesses all four leadership aptitudes, the ultimate leadership environment consists of a leadership team. Unfortunately, the tendency among leaders is to surround themselves with others who share similar aptitudes.

This happens for three reasons:

1. Magnetism

The Law of Magnetism says we attract who we are, not who we want.

The first staff member I ever hired was Stan Toler, a longtime friend of mine. We were friends even before I hired him as the only other staff person at the small church I pastored. Stan is a very successful leader in his own right, but he's just like me. Thus, we always wanted the same things.

2. Insecurity

People who are insecure typically do not like diversity. They wish everybody were like them. They want everybody to think alike, and when somebody is way out there and different, it makes them nervous.

3. Humanness.

It is part of human nature that people who are just like us make us feel more comfortable. When you say, "Here's what I think" and everybody else says, "Yeah, I think that, too," you can't help but feel good.

People who are different from us in their leadership aptitudes have a tendency to make us feel uncomfortable.

At INJOY, our leadership team includes directing leaders, team-building leaders, strategic leaders and operational leaders. I am in tune with and enjoy the ones who are just like me the most.

But the ones who help me the most are the ones who are not like me.

Since no leader possesses all four leadership aptitudes, the ultimate leadership environment consists of a leadership team.

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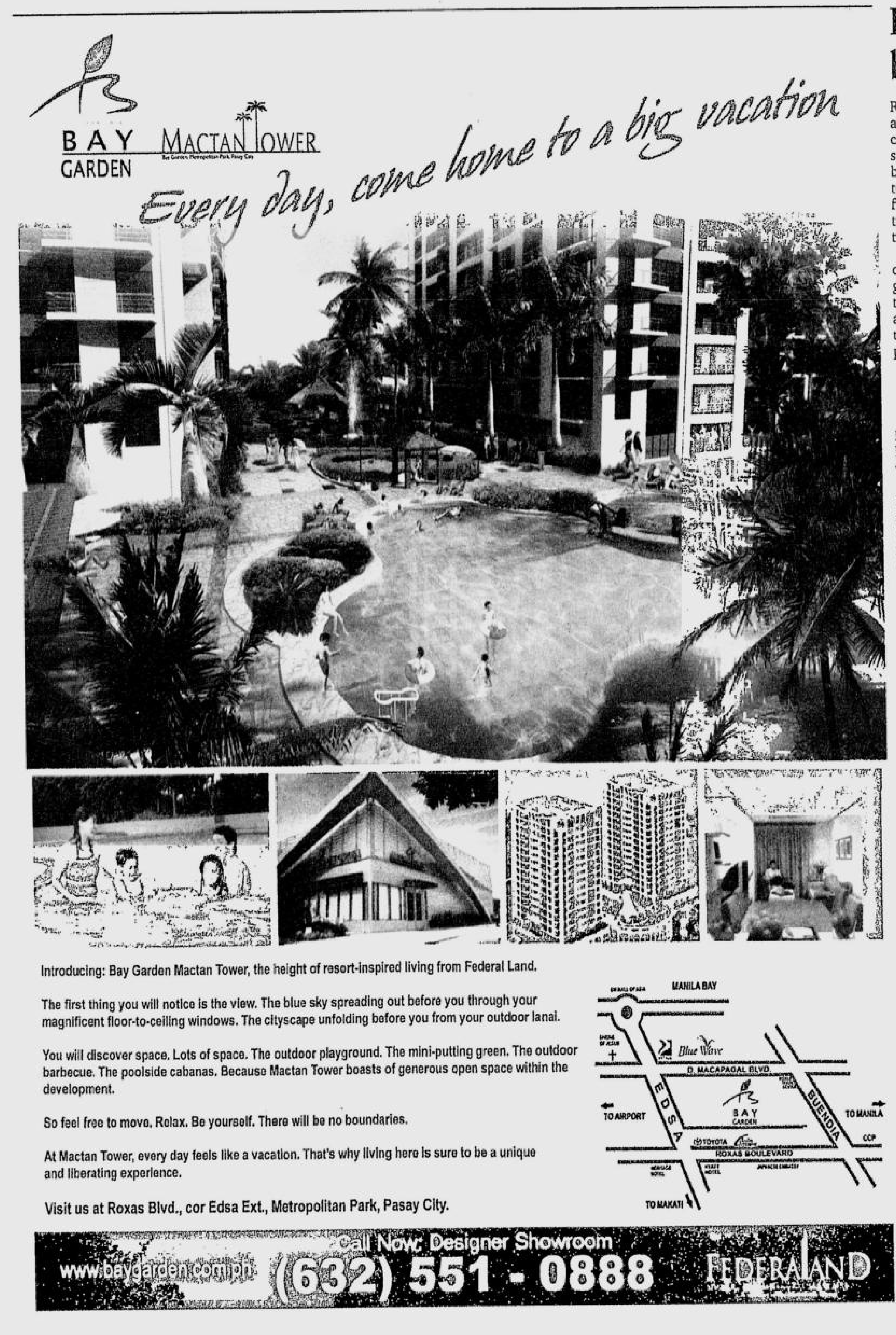

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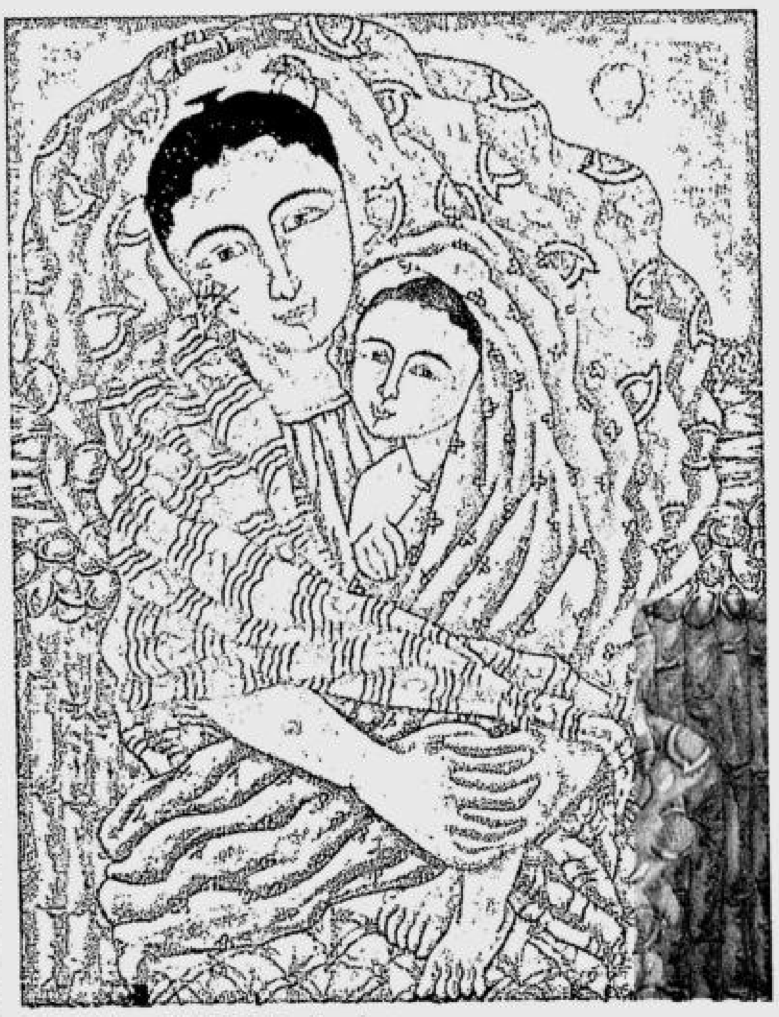
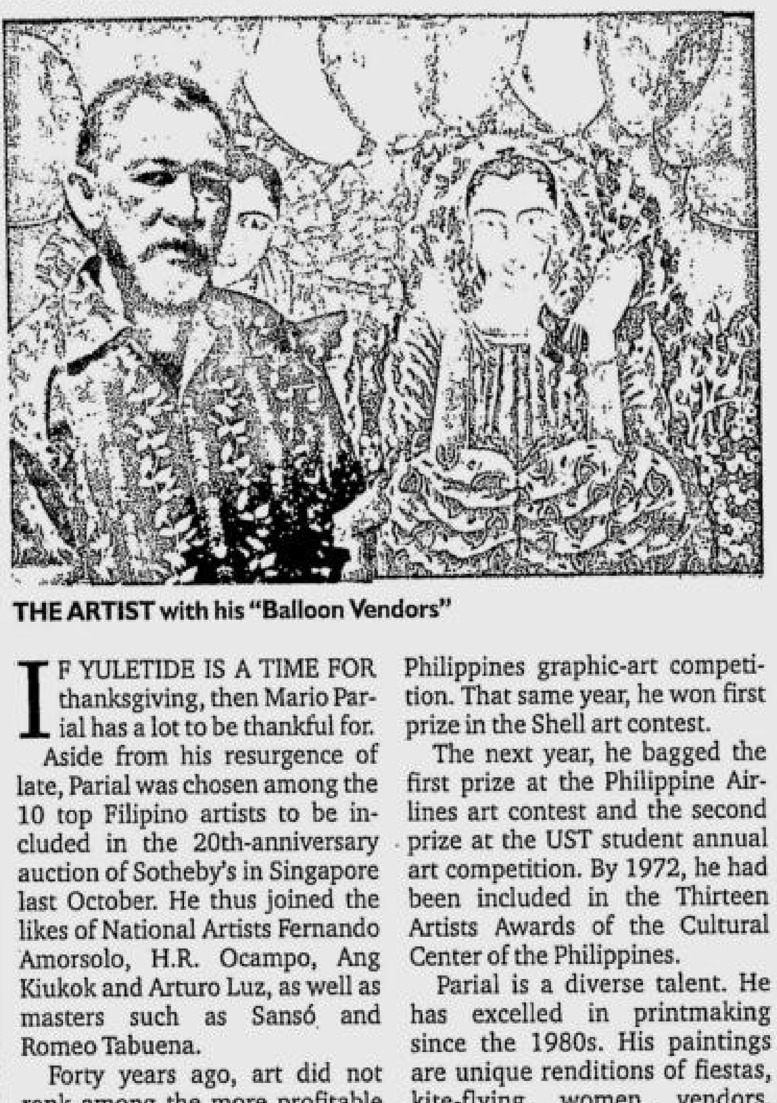
Mario Parial redux

Recently included in Sotheby's auction of Southeast Asian art, he is back with a vengeance


MOTHER and Child of the Bamboo


THE ARTIST with his "Balloon Vendors"

IF YULETIDE IS A TIME FOR thanksgiving, then Mario Parial has a lot to be thankful for.

Aside from his resurgence of late, Parial was chosen among the 10 top Filipino artists to be included in the 20th-anniversary auction of Sotheby's in Singapore last October. He thus joined the likes of National Artists Fernando Amorsolo, H.R. Ocampo, Ang Kiukok and Arturo Luz, as well as masters such as Sansó and Romeo Tabuena.

Forty years ago, art did not rank among the more profitable careers or professions for young people. But art proved an irresistible calling to the young man from Gapan, Nueva Ecija, who was encouraged by somebody named Benedicto Cabrera, known today as Bencab. "When he saw my works and recognized how interested I was in art, Bencab suggested that I pursue a career in Fine Arts, too."

Parial's career actually had a major jump-start. In 1966, while still a student at University of Santo Tomas, he won the grand prize at the Art Association of the Philippines graphic-art competition. That same year, he won first prize in the Shell art contest.

The next year, he bagged the first prize at the Philippine Airlines art contest and the second prize at the UST student annual art competition. By 1972, he had been included in the Thirteen Artists Awards of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Parial is a diverse talent. He has excelled in printmaking since the 1980s. His paintings are unique renditions of fiestas, kite-flying, women, vendors, Mother and Child.

His Marian works have been included in two international books on the subject, along with works by Michaelangelo, El Greco, Da Vinci and Raphael. The first book was edited by Life magazine editor in chief Michael Durham, while the second was written by Catherine Spretnak, a professor at Berkeley University.

Parial thinks he is now into his second life owing to his near-fatal freak bicycle accident in the 1970s, where he suffered a lacer-

MARIO/ C2

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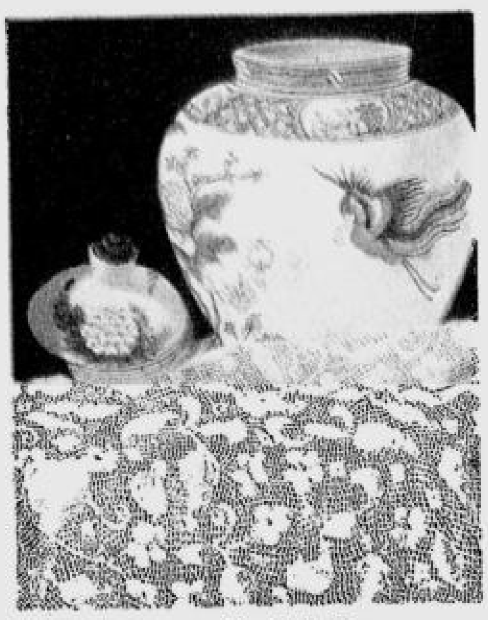
‘Still Life’ at Genesis, ‘3X’ at Mag:Net, Albor-Tequi-Tysmans a

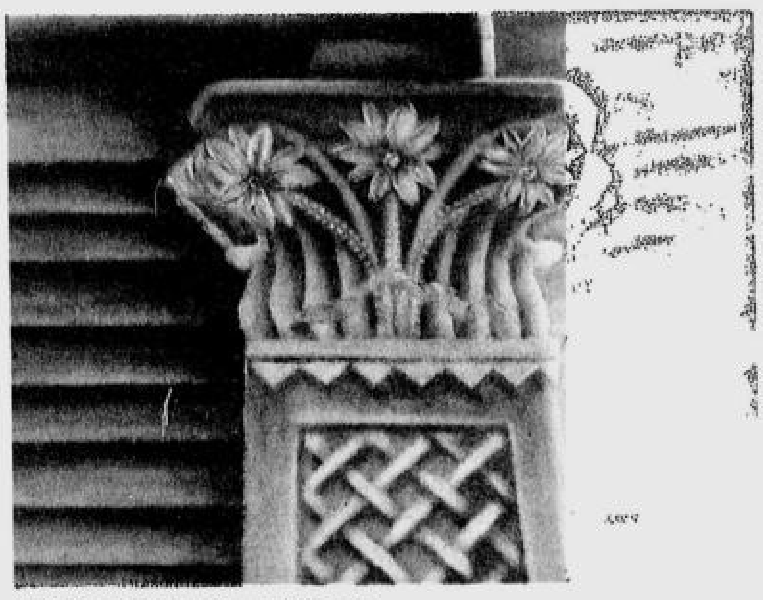
VISUAL ARTS


“FRAGILE Beauty,” by Molly Yap

GALLERY GENESIS (4/L BUILDING A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City) presents "Still Life: A Celebration," by members of the Makati Artists' Guild—Mel Cabriana, Peter Sutcliffe, Manuel Tuason and Molly Yap. The four are students of social realist Renato Habulan. The exhibit runs until Dec. 21. Call 6338137 to 38.

MAG:NET Gallery presents "3X," a group exhibit of Pablo Biglang-Awa, Alfred Cruz, Jucar Raquepo, until Dec. 31. Their works foreground abstract patterns as neutral elements to be appropriated for decoration's sake or as signifiers of a slew of historical referents. Mag:net Gallery ABS is at The Loop, ELJ Commercial Center, ABS-CBN Compound Eugenio Lopez Jr. Drive, QC. Call 4100995.

RYAN JARA and Ryan Rubio will present a collaborative art exhibit at the Blueroom Art Gallery, 1354 Lacuna St. and Apolinario St., Bangkal, Makati City, Dec. 20-Jan. 15, 2006. In "Underground Floor," Jara and Rubio will focus on two serious and opposing subjects: vanity and faith. Guests of honor on the opening day, Dec. 20, 6:30 p.m., are Technological University of the Philippines president Godofredo E. Gallega and art patrons, Boyet Medina and Nilo Mapa. Call 7510746 or 09298153038.


“UNTITLED,” by Manuel Tuason

THE ART Discovery and Learning Foundation, Inc. presents an ongoing exhibit, "Handog-Sining," until Jan. 6, 2006, at the SSS Gallery, East Avenue, Quezon City. The exhibit features landscapes, still life paintings, seascapes and human interest in varied media.

GUS Albor, Ofelia Gelvezon-Tequi and Wig Tysmans hold their respective solo exhibits of recent works at the Pintô Art Gallery, 1 Sierra Madre St.. Grand Heights, Barangay San Roque, Antipolo City. Albor's "Mantra" features his recent paintings, sculptures and installation works, in the House Gallery. "Country Still Lifes" on view at the Gallery Shop and Gallery 2 featuring acrylic paintings and 16 works of various still lifes done in Eu-

GlobeQUEST TouchPoint: Enabling Multi-Channel Solutions

Due to the rapid advancements in technology, bank customers have become more demanding and impatient than ever. They expect banks to provide services that are conveniently available anytime and anywhere.

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This development pushed GlobeQUEST, the corporate arm of Innove Communications, Inc., to expand its service lines and come up with a complete solution that will address the e-banking needs of the banking industry. Thus, the creation of a GlobeQUEST TouchPoint.

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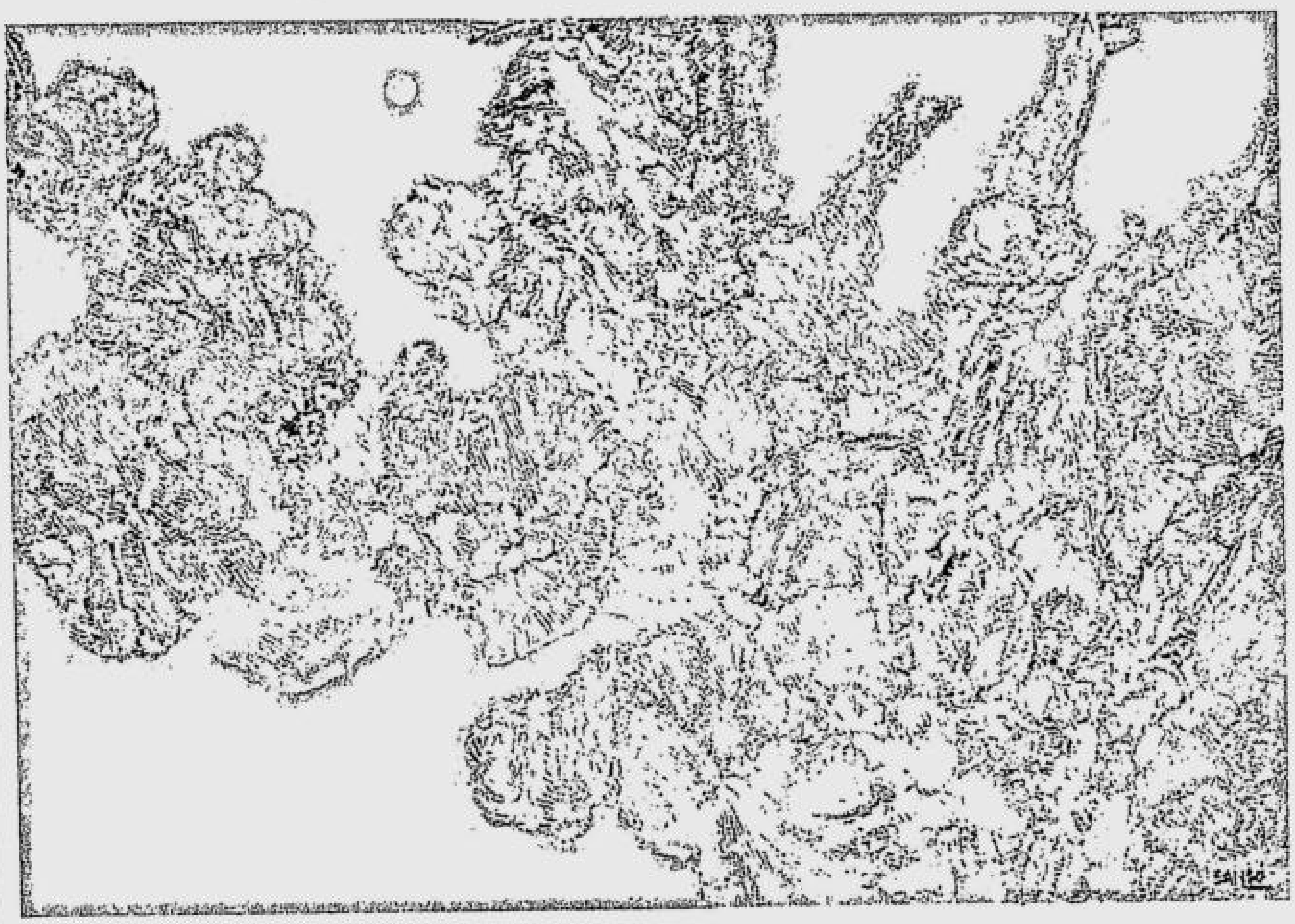

“CURVED & Radiant,” Juvenal Sansó

Sansó’s sorcery, Wuzela’s women

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

THE LAST OF SANSÓ FOR THE art year that is drawing to a close ended with a bang, a fitting climax for the renowned artist who has been through life's cycles in his manifold and truly prodigious career.

Hardly had the artist resettled in Makati after returning from Paris, when he was advised that a retrospective of his works through various periods was being organized, to be shown at The Podium Lobby, where he had previously exhibited.

The 76-year-old artist was ecstatic and revved up by a succession of successful shows.

His homecoming, after living for over 20 years in Paris, the city he loves most dearly, next perhaps to Manila, was marked by a well-represented show, period-wise, designed to trace his evolution as an artist who has endured and remains an endearing figure in the contemporary art world.

Celebratory was the mood in the show spanning four decades, with works generously loaned by collectors, many of whom have remained loyal to the man since the '50s when he won two gold medals at the Art Association of the Philippines (AAP) Annual.

Called “Felicitations,” the works covered the '60s through the '70s, the '80s, the '90s, and the new millennium.

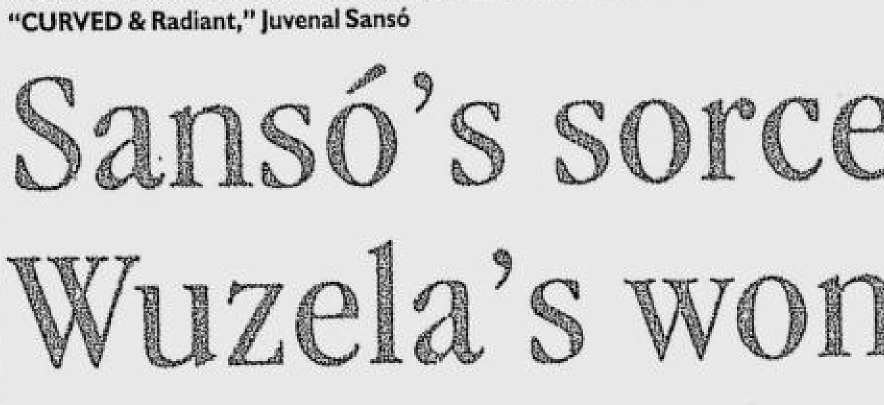
The pieces mounted by Galerie Joaquin reflected the changing climes and innumerable journeys and the peripatetic life that Sansó had led.

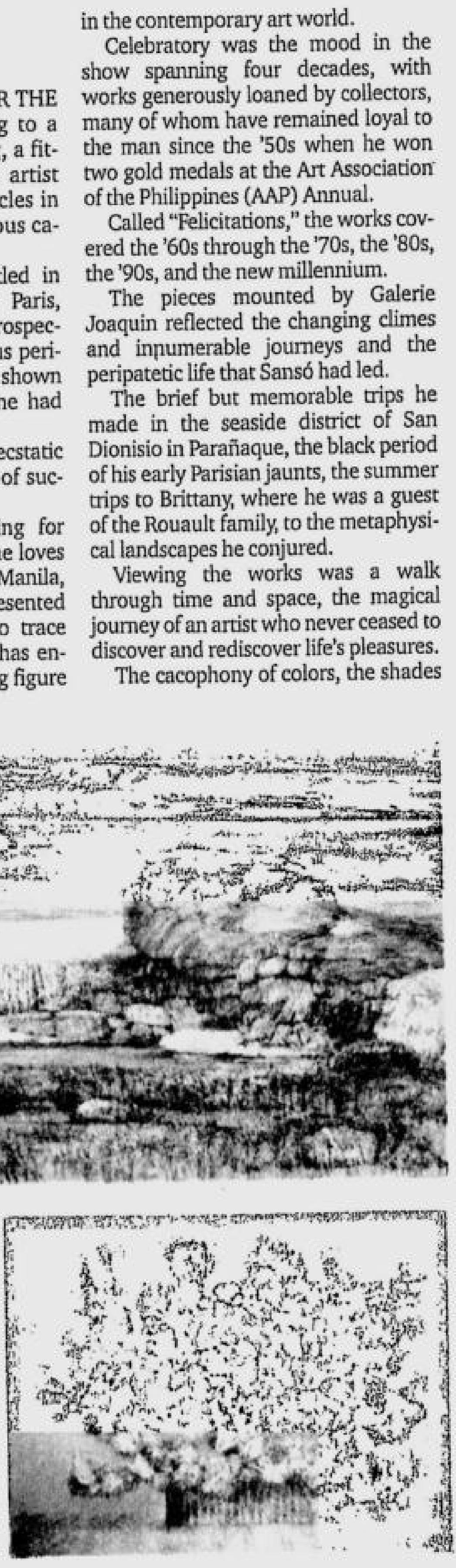
The brief but memorable trips he made in the seaside district of San Dionisio in Parañaque, the black period of his early Parisian jaunts, the summer trips to Brittany, where he was a guest of the Rouault family, to the metaphysical landscapes he conjured.

Viewing the works was a walk through time and space, the magical journey of an artist who never ceased to discover and rediscover life's pleasures.

The cacophony of colors, the shades of exuberance, the changing patterns of life, they all come to life in this magnificent collection gathered from various sources. In paintings carefully culled from his peak periods, there is Sansó's unmistakable touch with nature, his deep fascination with certain sites. As always, the works gently throb with the reverberations of life forces.

Sansó in the flesh is equally admirable: a man of quiet yet sparkling dignity, a Spanish by birth, a Filipino at heart, simple yet sophisticated, a citizen of the world who has returned to his roots.


“SERENE Waters Flowing”


“ABUNDANT & Growing”

Expressionist

The upcoming painter Lily Avila-Wuzela has, like Sansó, lived in various capitals abroad, from Jakarta, Indonesia to Vienna, Austria, finally settling in the country, at least for now, where she has pursued painting these past few years.

Married to an Austrian engineer who builds bridges and has supported his wife's art, Wuzela is clearly partial to the expressionist style, with its unchartered ways with the image.

In her first solo show, “Flores et Femina,” at The Rockwell Club Lobby (until Dec. 26), the artist demonstrates her uncanny ability to zero in on the subjects of her canvases, women of substance and grace. The images are reinforced by a suite of floral icons in well-appointed, homespun settings.

The female subjects are likewise enhanced by minimalist expressions and appurtenances, allowing them to bare their soul mainly by revealing the body. They are mostly middle-aged, upper-class women who have achieved a good measure of independence as wives, mothers and career executives.

The one portrait outside of this group is that of a cigar-chomping Ilocano woman, who wears a casual, winning smile to match her basket of red daisies.

In her rendering of the quintessential woman figure, in a fetal pose inside a large red rose as emblem of her femininity, Wuzela demonstrates that her pursuit of the female subject has serendipitously taken an unexpected turn. Both in treatment and sensibility, the painting may well be a preview of the creative force that propels the artist to higher artistic ground.

A new talent has arrived, and is about ready to take the art world by storm.

One truly a

From page C4

plenitude of artworks of various mediums in an exhibit called “Nov'blue 2.” Here are gathered 25 artists, with some represented by as many as four artworks.

Several are noted personages on the art scene, and a few may already be considered masters of their craft. Consider the lineup: Pandy Aviado, Ferdinand Doctolero, Red Mansueto, Alan Rivera, Ronaldo Ruiz, Lirio Salvador, Jevijoe Vitug.

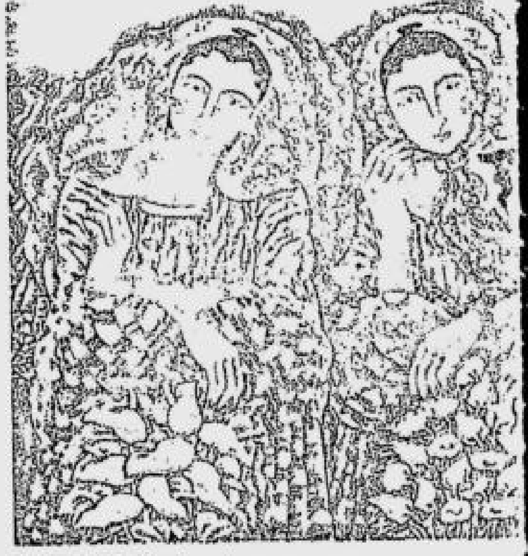
Others are upcoming but already notable: Joey Cobcobo, Rommer Fajardo, Lynyrd Arwyn Paras, Sam Penaso, Ryan Rubio.

As can be expected from such assembly, the place fairly bursts into a chaos of colors and forms. Here are mostly paintings, but scattered hereabouts are some sculptural pieces, reliefs, combine paintings. assemblages.

The paintings range from figurative to abstract, from muted monochromes to a blaze of warm tones, from washes to impasto, from the conventional oil and acrylic to the nontraditional mixed media.

The gallery itself has an unconventional layout. It is a split room composed of seven angular walls, looking somewhat weird. The walls are relatively narrow, so there's no way for the artworks but to jostle one another off the walls. (Talk of an alternative art space.)

True to Ignacio's vision, however, the


“FLOWER Vendors”

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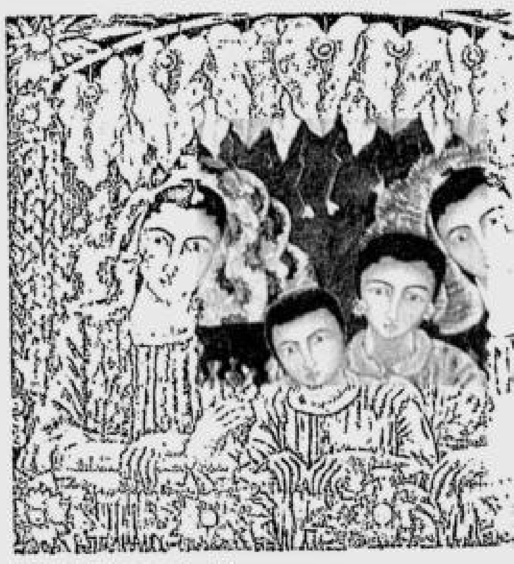
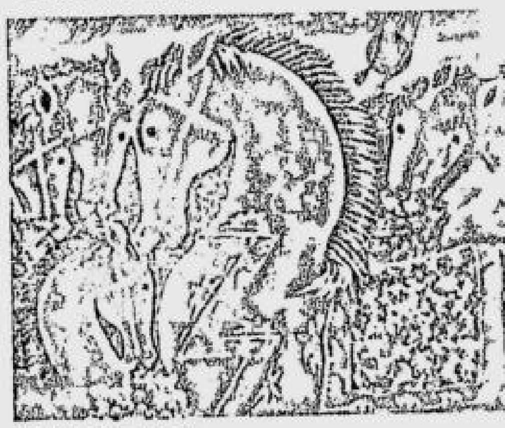
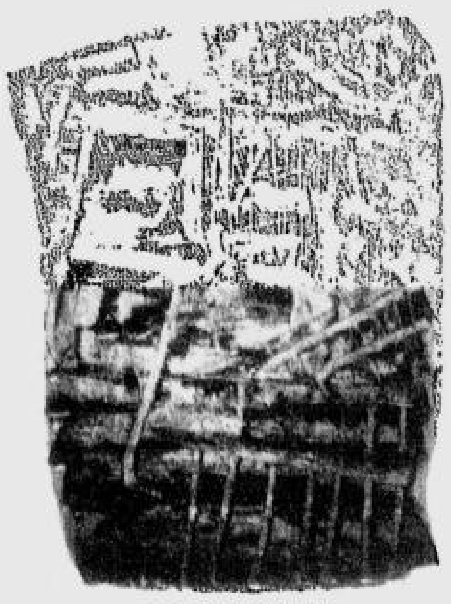
Mario Pari


“PAHIYAS Festival”


“EIGHT Horses”

t Pintô

"SILI King," by Wig Tysmans


"MARGINAL I," by Briccio Santos

rope by Gelvezon-Tequi. Gallery 1 presents exhibit of prints by one of the country's top photographers, Wig Tysmans. The dominant theme of the exhibit is the nude, which the artist considers a longtime passion. All exhibits run until Jan. 20, 2006. Call 6971015.

JEFF Van den Broeck, a studio potter in Baguio, presents "Stoneware (Iron Is a Color)," a solo exhibit at the Breathing Space Café Gallery, Penthouse, Lopez Building, Session Road and Assumption, Baguio City, until Jan. 28, 2006. Van den Broeck's works show some influences by the Bernard Leach tradition of Anglo-Oriental style of pottery.

THE METROPOLITAN Museum of Manila brings back "Artes at Angkan" until February 2006. The exhibit features hair-embroidered landscapes attributed to Adelaida Paterno and paintings by Juan Luna, Felix Ressureccion Hidalgo and early woman painter Paz Paterno. Call 5230613 or 5211517.

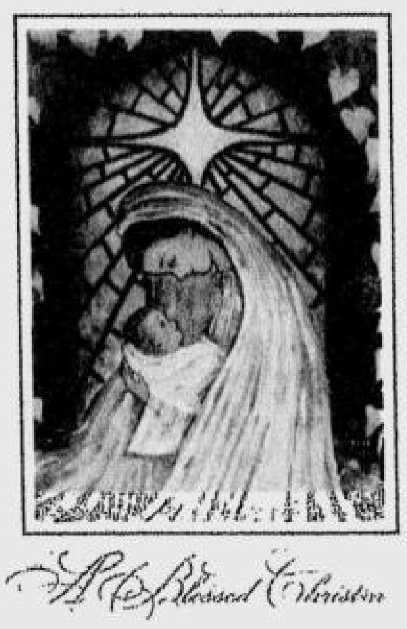
MAG:NET Gallery Paseo (Makati City) presents a one-man exhibit of Briccio Santos featuring small abstract works done in acrylic on paper until Jan. 3, 2006. Call 8177895.

Marian Christmas cards

THE MARIAN MISSIONARIES OF the Holy Cross (MMHC), a religious congregation of priests and brothers providing spiritual aid to public school youths and prisoners in the national, regional and local penitentiaries, is selling Christmas cards featuring artworks by Bro. Gerard Maria (Carlos Vincent Ruiz), the grand-prize winner of the 2005 International Eucharistic Year-National Commemorative Stamps Design Contest, a project of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and the Philippine Postal Corporation.

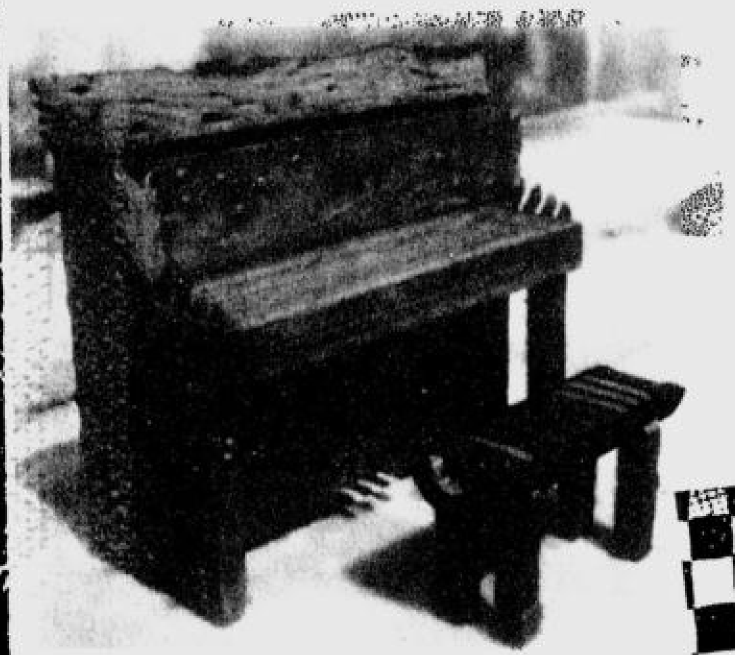
The sale of the cards is part of MMHC's efforts to raise funds for the construction of a new seminary for its growing congregation in Marikina City.

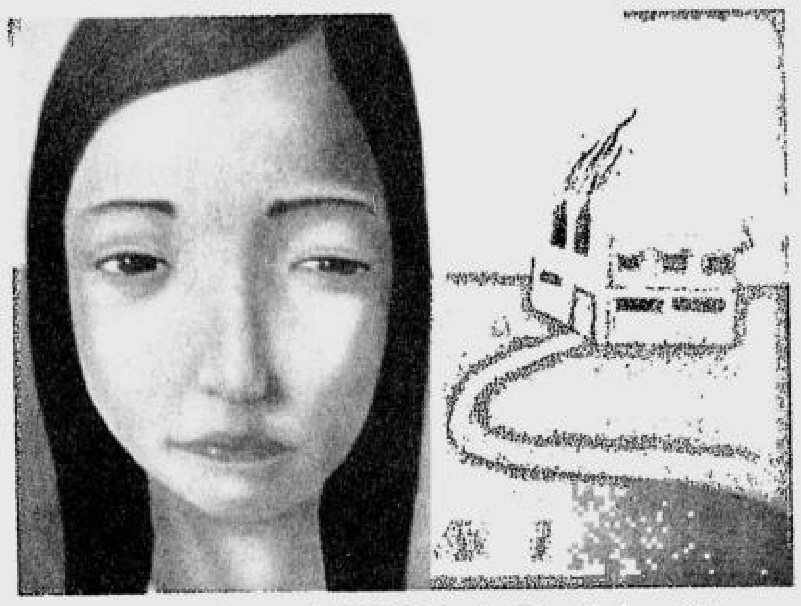
The special edition cards are available in packs of 10. Call 0921-8150518, or 8932905 to 08.

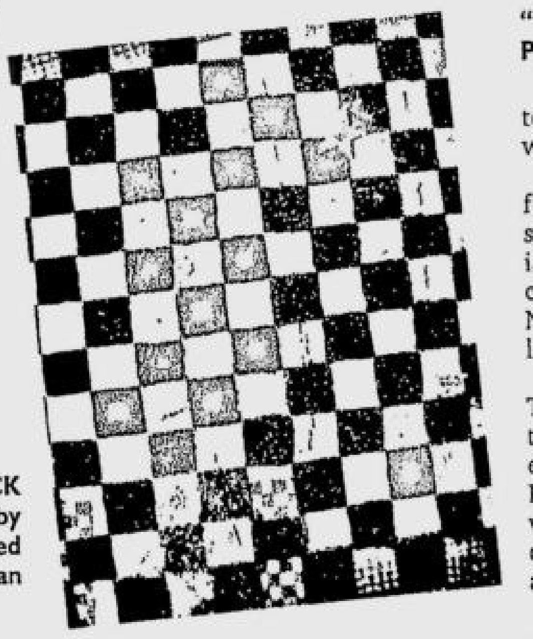


THE SPECIAL-EDITION Christmas cards carry two original artworks that feature images of the Mother and Child.

lternative art space


"WILD Piano," by Rafael Ignacio


"WISHING for the Rain," by Lynyrd Arwyn Paras


"CHECK M8," by Led Pamitan

works. of his students have been given pride of place on the white walls near or directly opposite the entrance.

Meanwhile, the pieces by Aviado, Rivera, Mansueto and Doctolero are on the corners. Ruiz's painted reliefs are on the floor. Ignacio's sculptured piano finds itself outside the door.

These latter artworks, by the way, do not have to be announced. They just announce themselves. You may throw them to a dim corner and they'd glitter, people would still notice.

Ignacio's sculptural piece "Wild Piano," for instance, is actually a recycled piano, still playable but now covered with unpolished hardwood and embellished with rococo carvings and tumescent protrusions. No one would have missed that strange-looking detailing.

This exhibit is such a happy mishmash. True, it has the disadvantage of distraction, as the viewer cannot fully appreciate each piece placed so close to one another. But then it has the greater advantage of variety, of richness, which is, of course, only reflective of the booming Philippine art.

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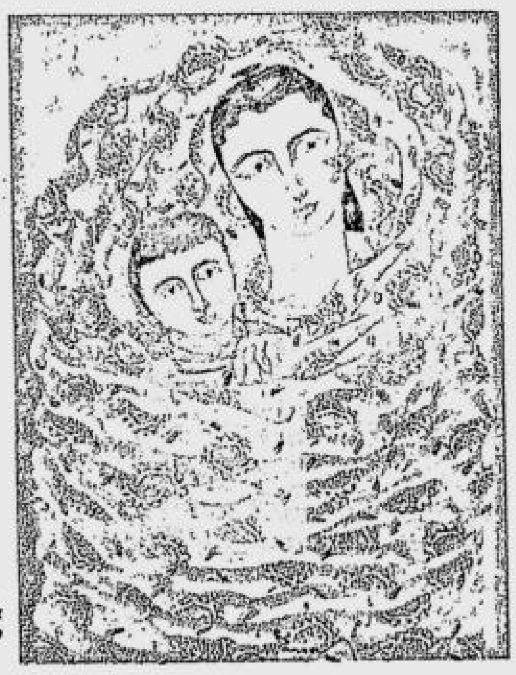

DONNA & Child"

l redux

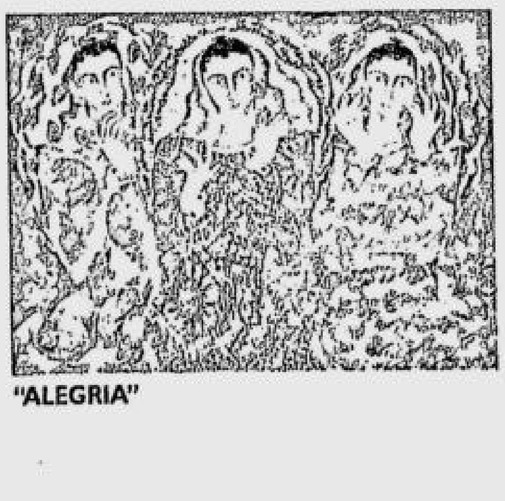
From page C1

ated duodenum and punctured pancreas. Three years ago, he suffered from a slipped disc, which caused him extreme pain he could hardly paint for a long time.

But he returned last year with "Pagdiriwang (Celebration)," a sold-out show. For his 20th solo, he is presenting "Pasasalamat (Thanksgiving)," which will open tonight at 6:30 at the Centre Gallery, Galerie Joaquin, 371 P. Guevarra St., San Juan (tel. 7239253 or 7239418, e-mail galerie_joaquin@yahoo.com or visit www.galeriejoaquin.com). The show runs until Jan. 2, 2006.

"Undeniably, these are difficult times but I can only be grateful that people are still interested in my art," Parial said, modest as ever. He added he had been overwhelmed by the response to his art. "*Maraming salamat po*," he could only say.

Jack Teotico


"ALEGRIA"

Zaballero vignettes grace charity Christmas cards

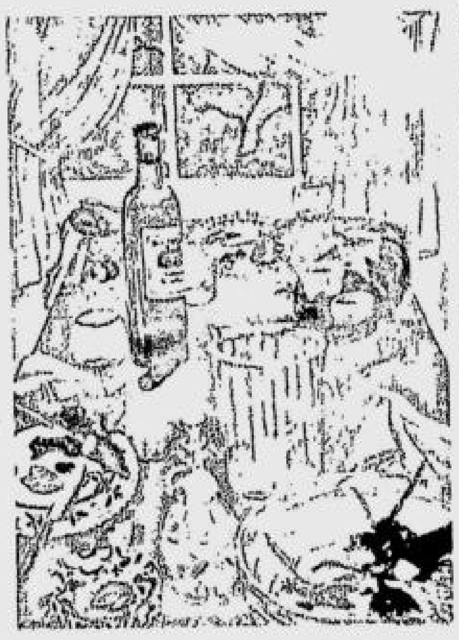
ASSUMPTION COLLEGE HAS launched Hain, a feeding program of its Social Development Division, together with the Kaagapay Boni Association.

Apart from feeding children, Hain's staff and volunteers also conduct nutrition lectures to parents of undernourished children. Beneficiaries of the program are 100 malnourished children, ages 1-10, from a depressed area on Bonifacio Avenue, Mandaluyong.

To raise funds, Assumption is selling Year 2006 tabletop calendars featuring lovely still-life vignettes by artist Phyllis Zaballero at P150 each. Selected from an acclaimed series of her paintings, they are inspired by her personal memories of meals partaken with friends and from her private moments of solitude in favorite spots around the world.

Donors may also sponsor a hungry child for only P12 a day (P360 per month or P4,320 per year).

Call Nene Narvaez or Lourdes Lumen, 817-0757 loc. 1032, fax 817-4889, or email isd@assumption.edu.ph.


"AFTER Sonia's Lunch," by Phyllis Zaballero

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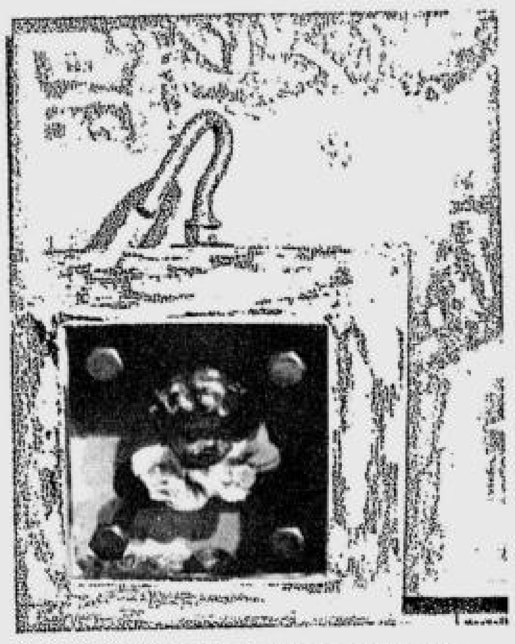


"UNTITLED," by Demosthenes Campos

By Constantino C. Tejero

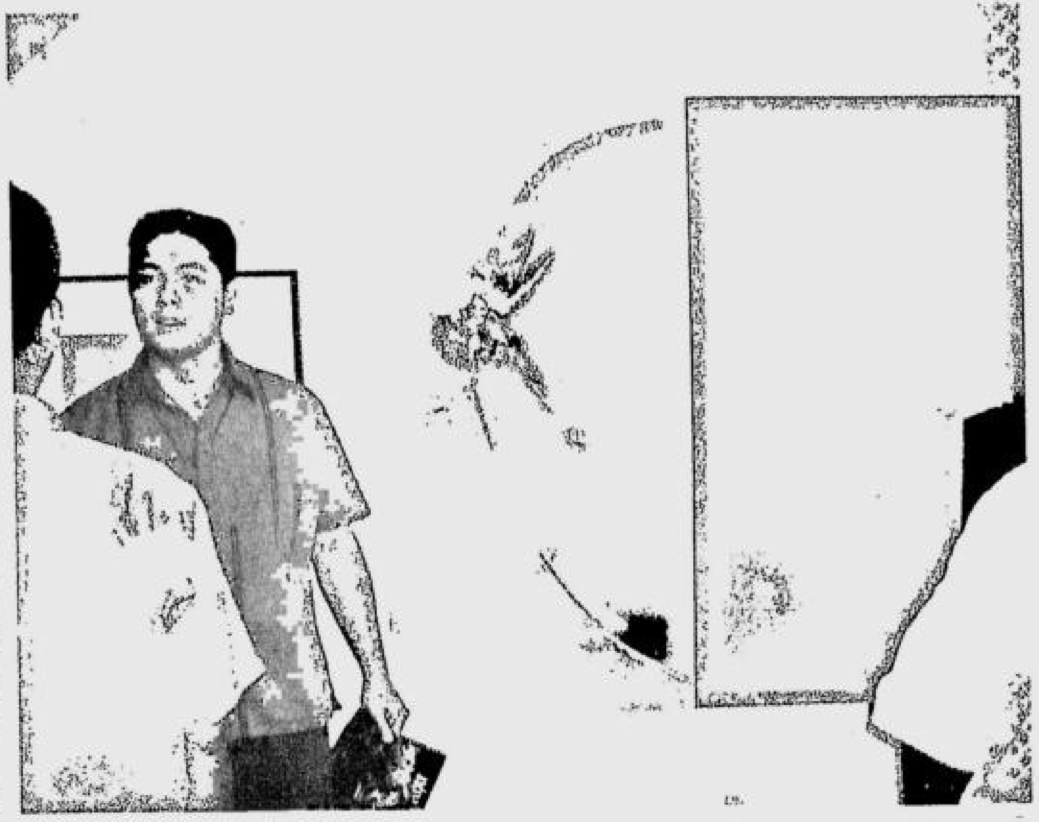
THIS IS GOING TO sound like a mantra, but another proof positive that art is booming in this country is the case of that little art gallery called Blueroom at 1354-A Lacuña St., Bangkal, Makati City.

The place,is at a crossroad, surrounded by thrift stores, junkyards, machine shops, vehicular traffic. The existence of this gallery in that depressed area of Makati City is an anomaly enough, but the fact that it has been carrying world-class art and has survived its first year should be cause for wonder.

Gallery owner Rafael Ignacio, himself an artist and art professor at the Technological University of the Philippines, says sale is only secondary to him. Of primary consideration is giving a venue for the exhibition of his students' artworks, plus those of established artists who may happen to come by.

For its first anniversary this month, Blueroom is offering a

ONE/C2



ARTWORKS of emerging artists are given pride of place on the wall facing the entrance.

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MOTO SPOTTING @ iDJ SEARCH LAUNCH PARTY

NAME: Tina Tinio
PROFESSION: Business Manager, Shu Uemura
MOTO PHONE SPOTTED: Pink RAZR
WHAT'S YOUR MOTO: "Work hard, play hard, rock hard."

NAME: Caliph8
PROFESSION: DJ
MOTO PHONE SPOTTED: ROKR
WHAT'S YOUR MOTO: "Celebrate the past, create the present, and innovate for the future."

NAME: Carlitos Ortoll
PROFESSION: Property management and boat charter
MOTO PHONE SPOTTED: ROKR
WHAT'S YOUR MOTO: "No expectations, no disappointment."

NAME: Gabby Alipe
PROFESSION: Lead singer, Urbandub
MOTO PHONE SPOTTED: e680i
WHAT'S YOUR MOTO: "If at first you don't succeed, then skydiving is not for you."

NAME: Mon Maramba
PROFESSION: DJ
MOTO PHONE SPOTTED: e398
WHAT'S YOUR MOTO: "Music can move minds."

NAME: Brian Quebengco
PROFESSION: Entrepreneur
MOTO PHONE SPOTTED: ROKR
WHAT'S YOUR MOTO: "Never stop dreaming."

NAME: Gian Romano
PROFESSION: Designer
MOTO PHONE SPOTTED: Pink RAZR
WHAT'S YOUR MOTO: "Invest in fashion, not in emotion."

A 1935 PORTRAIT by Ricarte Puruganan of an old lady who must have been bursting with pride at the graduation of her two daughters, highlighting the high value placed by Filipinos on education.

LIFESTYLE

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Treasures from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

TWO COFFEE-TABLE BOOKS published by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) documenting its extensive gold and painting collections are welcome additions to the meager printed records of our national patrimony.

"Ginto, History Wrought in Gold," written by Ramón Villegas and photographed by Wig Tysmans, has won the Anvil and National Book Awards.

Villegas comprehensively catalogues the vast gold collection of the Central Bank. The collection was started by the Money Museum in the late 1970s to trace the evolution of Philippine currency. Since then it has grown into one of the most important gold collections in Asia.

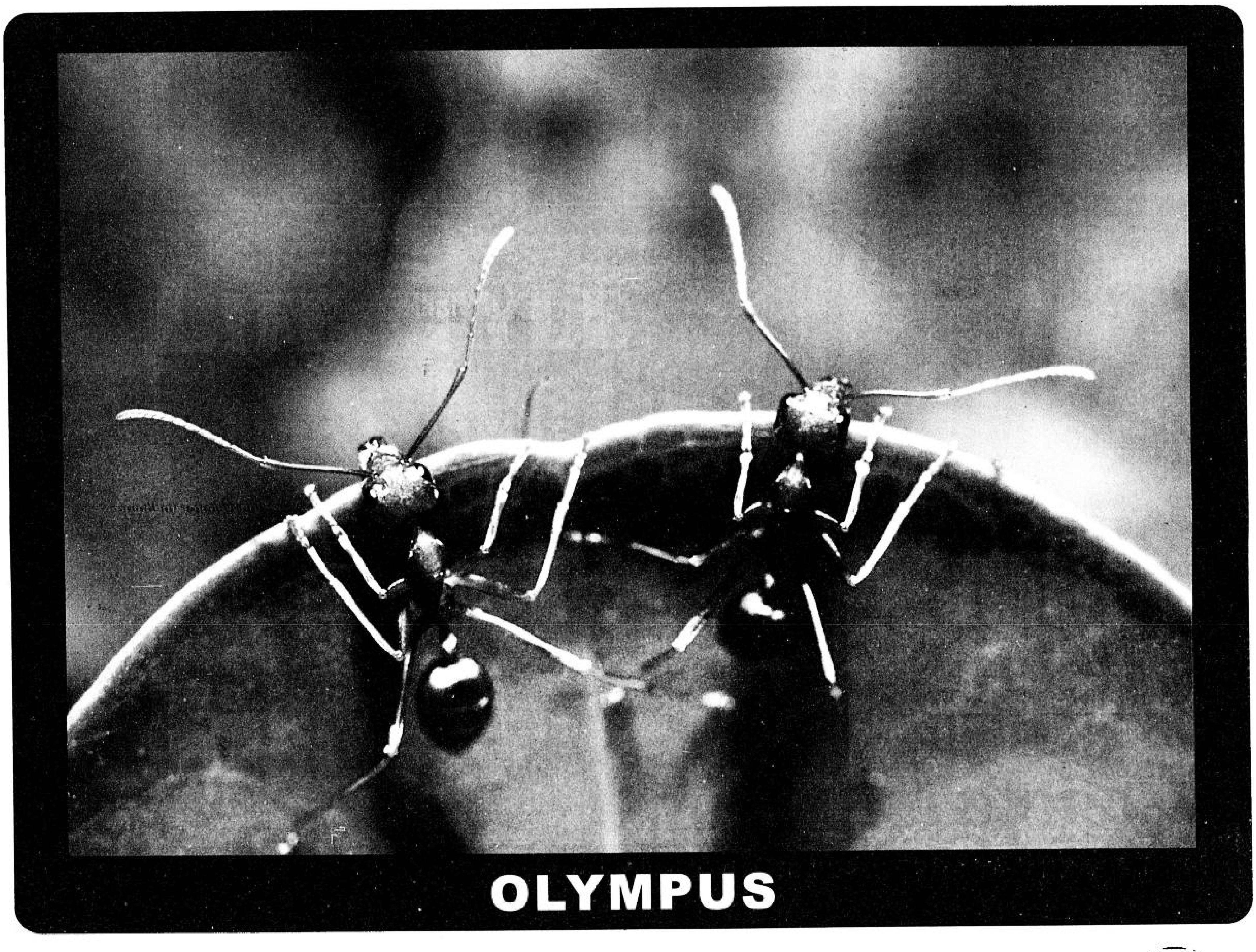
Gold has always figured in Philippine history. Since ancient times, the Philippines has been an active gold producer, proven by the oldest piece in the collection, a gold bead from Palawan dating to approximately 700-500 BC. For most of the 20th century, the country topped gold production in Southeast Asia.

Butuan, writes Villegas, owed its existence to gold mined at the headwaters of Agusan River in the Diwata mountain range. The economic influence of the ancient settlement was great. It was where local merchants bartered gold for foreign goods.

Other goods recovered from Butuan—ceramics, glass beads, bronze—illustrate the extent of Butuan trade, all evidence of contact with China, Vietnam, and other Asian countries. As a result, it emerged as an urbanized port center and an entrepôt during the first millennium.

The high quality of the gold artifacts establish that our ancestors were not only adept at sourcing and mining the precious metal. They were also excellent craftsmen who worked

TREASURES/D2



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Treasures from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

From page D1

and shaped the element into extremely fine objects for barter or body ornamentation.

One of the Philippines' most famous archaeological artifacts, the 20-cm high, 24-karat Gold Image of Agusan, now at the Field Museum in Chicago, resembles a Hindu goddess with an intricate headdress that links the gold tradition to Javanese or Indian influences, as eminent Philippine anthropologists believe.

Gold brought the early Philippines in contact with Asia.

Villegas traces Chinese records that say, "from the 10th and 13th centuries AD, diplomatic and trade missions from the Kingdom of Butuan were being received at the Imperial Court," proof that it was a flourishing international port and a settlement with an established civil structure that exercised governance over residents who would have included traders, craftsmen, and others who would have had religious and cultural activities as well.

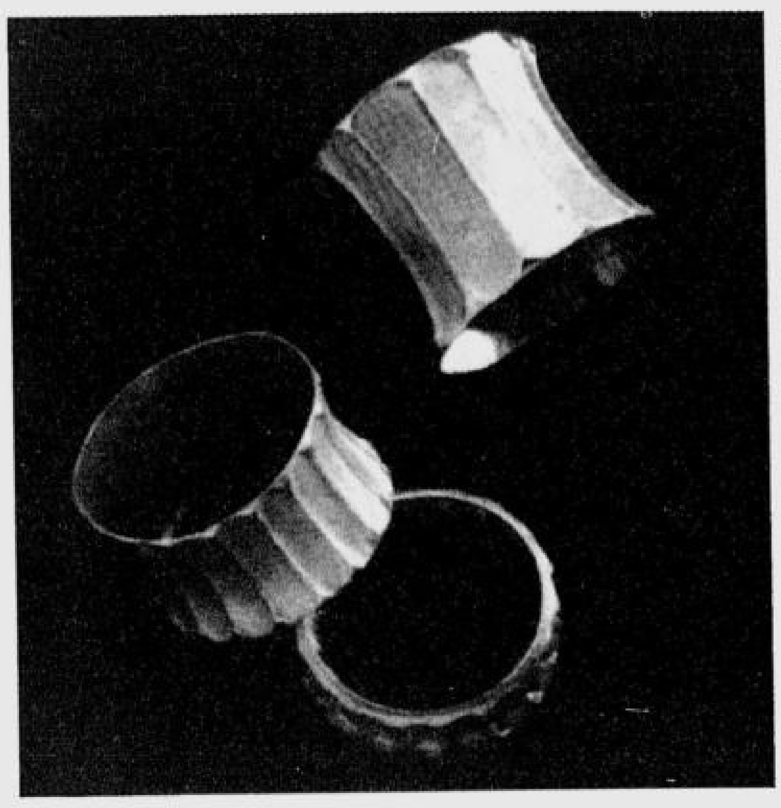
Butuan declined in the 14th century for reasons still unknown today. By the time the Spanish arrived a few centuries later, its glory had gone. The splendor of the BSP's gold collection, now on permanent exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila, gives a good idea of the extent and quality of early Philippine gold production.

Important painting trove

The BSP is truly the repository of the nation's wealth. It is also the custodian of an important gold collection and probably the country's most important collection of paintings.

The painting collection is not accessible to the public, so the lavishly illustrated publication of the collection in "Tanaw: Perspectives on the Bangko Central ng Pilipinas Painting Collection" is the next best thing.

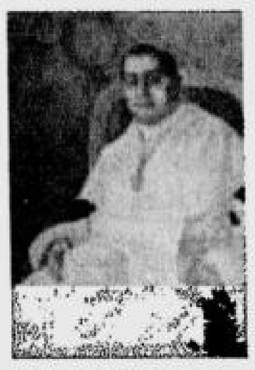
Ramon Lerma edits essays by Jaime Laya, Alice Guillermo, Cid Reyes, Ma. Victoria Herrera, and Fatima Lasay, who give their perspectives on the collection.

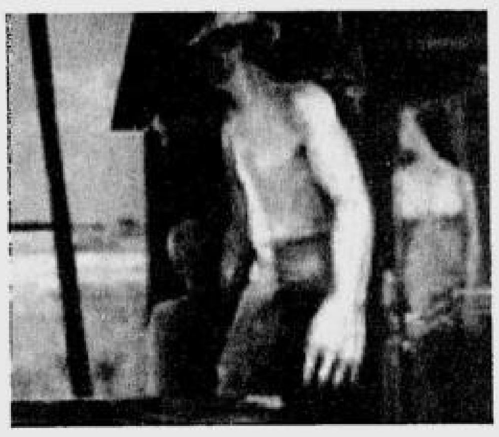

FINELY wrought gold bracelets tell the story of centuries of Philippine supremacy in gold craftsmanship.

In "Progenitors of the Filipino Nation," Laya writes about portraiture, an art form where "we gain a better idea of the development of the Filipino nation. They [portraits] help us trace our roots and sharpen our sense of national identity."

Portraits from the 19th century to the present record costume, jewelry, furniture, and interior architecture changes. They also record history, inspire the viewers by capturing on canvas memories of heroes, presidents, clerics, businessmen, matriarchs and others who have shaped the nation physically or spiritually, as portraits of saints, mostly anonymously done, speak of rewards in the afterlife.

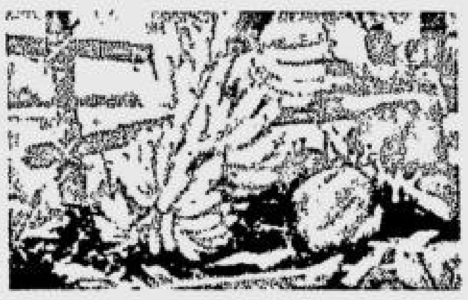
"The art of a country does not speak in unison but with many voices—as in the telling of a narrative from different points of view, concerns, and interests," writes Guillermo.


"FR. SILVESTRE Sancho," by Victorio Edades


BY EDGAR Doctor

Guillermo illustrates her narrative with contrasting points of view, pastoral paintings from the 1850s, Amorsolo pastorals of the 1930s and Baldemor's Paete of the 1980s.

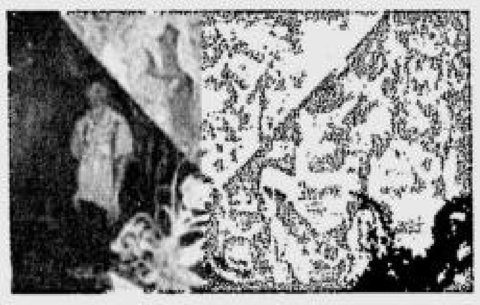
The narrative continues with different views of Philippine life, Tayag and Parial's takes on the Ati-Atihan, bloody flagellants and variations on the Mother and Child (either soft and tender or full of angst). The collection, indeed, tells the nation's story graphically.


STILL life by Gabriel Custodio

Herrera examines Philippine imagery, from the religious to the mundane, from the bucolic countryside to the urban density of the city, investigating the layers of transparency in Joya and Zobel.

Guillermo's insight that an art collection narrates a story from many points of view is precisely what both publications bring out. They tell the story of the Philippines through two collections under the stewardship of the BSP.

The Philippine story is one of excellence, whether told by gold or paintings, as the collections do.

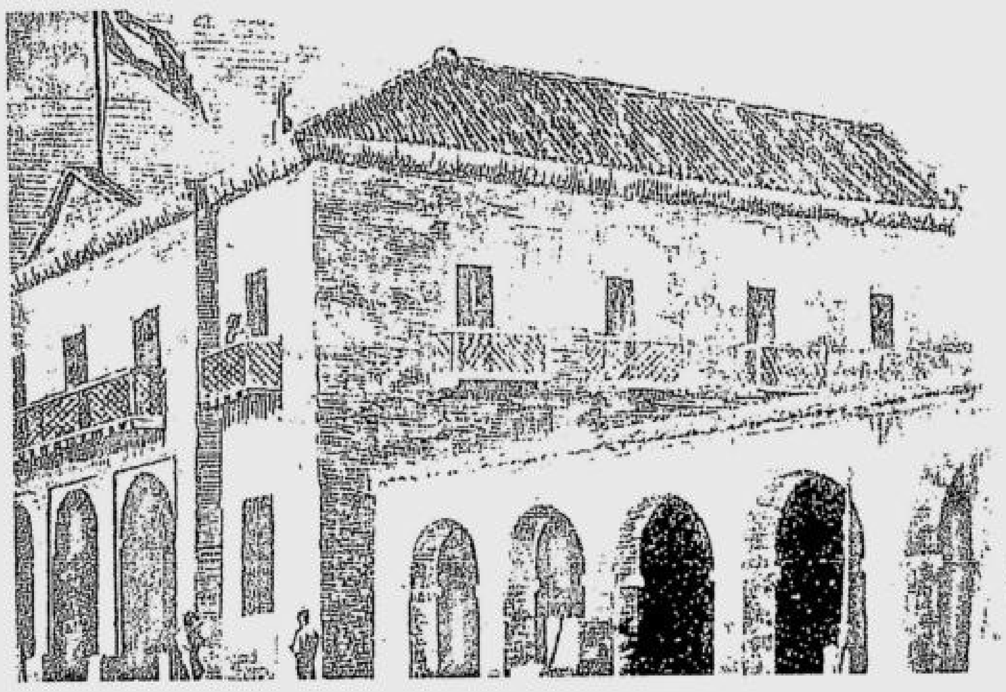

"LAS Flores para Dante," by Jaime de Guzman

The books prove to the reluctant Filipino that he is the heir to rich traditions, that he no longer needs to be obsessed with looking outward to foreign shores for inspiration. Rather, he must look at his cultural legacy to rediscover his missing sense of national pride.

To order the books, call the BSP Corporate Affairs Office, 5247011 loc. 2377 or 5249534.

Feedback is welcome at afvillalon@hotmail.com.

To mystics and poets, regardless of language, Spanish is the language of the soul


COURT of Justice of Tuguegarao, Cagayan

Spanish yesterday, today and tomorrow

By Lourdes Oben Santos
Contributor

SPANISH IS A PROMINENT language for international communication in our global village. We draw this "geographic" conclusion because two-thirds of the world's population speaks it, if not understands it. Though Spanish is not a universal language, it is widely spoken and understood in many parts of the world.

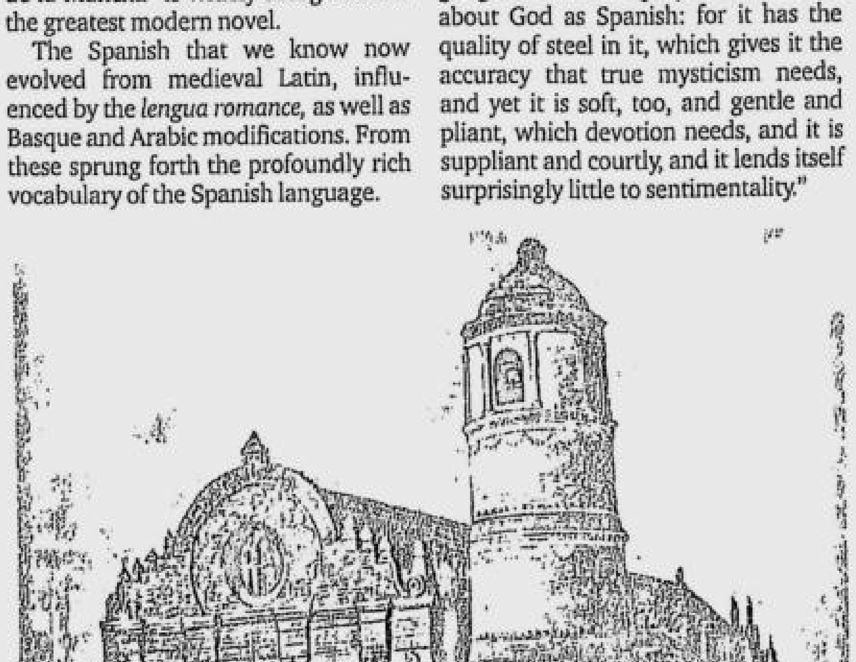
And as we delve deeply into the nuances of the Spanish language, spoken and written, we find the clear dimensions of its moral and aesthetic values, which are evident when one considers that Miguel de Cervantes' "Don Quijote de la Mancha" is widely recognized as the greatest modern novel.

The Spanish that we know now evolved from medieval Latin, influenced by the *lengua romance*, as well as Basque and Arabic modifications. From these sprung forth the profoundly rich vocabulary of the Spanish language.

In fact, there appears a universal acceptance that if English is the language of the business world, Spanish is the language of the human soul.

Last April 17, at Pope Benedict XVI's Inaugural Mass, the first reading was read in Greek, while the second, in Spanish. We believe Spanish was picked so as to make the message easily understood by the huge congregation of diverse tongues at St. Peter's Square.

No less than the American mystical writer, Thomas Merton, paid tribute to the Spanish tongue—"I would listen to the harmonious sermon of the Spanish priests, the very grammar of which is full of dignity and mysticism. After Latin, it seems to be there is no language so fitted for prayer and for talk about God as Spanish: for it has the quality of steel in it, which gives it the accuracy that true mysticism needs, and yet it is soft, too, and gentle and pliant, which devotion needs, and it is suppliant and courtly, and it lends itself surprisingly little to sentimentality."


TUMAUINI Church in Isabela

Spanish as the language of mysticism and of the soul is evident in the array of mystics and saints produced by Spain—St. Dominic de Guzman, St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Theresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, St. Pedro Poveda, St. José Maria Escriva—all of whom spoke to God in Spanish.

Filipinos cannot do away with the language of their forefathers. History has it that our own poets and patriots had written with their blood in Spanish. The very beginnings of our civil society—its laws, writs and decrees—saw print in Spanish.

Ingrained, intermingled and blended so well with our ordinary speech and everyday language are Castilian words, phrases and derivatives. At the baptismal font, we got our Spanish names from the calendar of saints of the Catholic faith.

Noteworthy, too, are the interracial Fil-Hispanic marriages, the generations of *insulares* and *peninsulares*, that wrought a quasi-culture of their own, including the "mellowed tongue," a characteristic of which makes it easier for us, Filipinos, to acquire the Spanish idiom.

Which proves that the Spanish colonization of the Philippines (the islands named after King Philip II of Spain) for over 300 years did have an impact on the development of our civilization, beliefs, customs and traditions.

Perhaps most important, the Spanish episode resulted in the "linguistic infusion" that enhanced the 90 languages all over the islands, which in the long run gave birth to Filipino—our national language.

True to herself, the Philippines rose and shone in the past. She rises and shines again with streaks of her Spanish heritage. And she can only continue to shine if she makes the effort to look back and appreciate her heritage.

Serenade for the heart and soul

By Mona E. Montevirgen
Contributor

WHEN SERENATA STRINGS STARTED out as a group, it was simply out of sheer pleasure for playing good music.

Except for the free live orchestral music coming from the concert at Luneta Park, fine classical music performed live was then available only to the cultured class which could afford high-priced concert tickets, or to privileged hotel customers regaled by performances in lobby lounges.

The Serenata Strings actually went through this route. Playing nightly at the Manila Peninsula Hotel lobby since 1992, the group's music ranged from romantic classics to contemporary pop-jazz pieces, with a special fondness for Latin music like samba and bossa nova.

Soon the group felt there was something more in store for them than just lounge acts. Together with his violinist teenage son, Lawrence Andrew "LA" Arquero, and two other musicians, Bobby Abadines (flute) and Benny San José (bass), Lorenz Arquero, the band guitarist, worked to get the group playing again after their hotel contract ended.

Celebrations

In the last few years, Serenata Strings has moved from the confines of hotel lobbies to places and gatherings where celebrations take place: wedding rites and receptions, *despedidas*, debuts and corporate parties.

Of late, the group has been performing live every Thursday at the Vivere Suites in Alabang.

Serenata Strings enjoys a good reputation among its many satisfied clients, who in turn give generous referrals. Orchestral music, especially string quartets or quintets, have become the "in" thing in weddings, somehow giving these important occasions a touch of class, and Serenata Strings is at the forefront of the new trend.

"It's flattering and quite fulfilling to be appreciated and paid for something you actually enjoy doing. It is like having a double treat," says Lorenz.

Elegant, dreamy

At the birthday celebration of INQUIRER editor in chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, Serenata Strings regaled her and her PDI colleagues with classic romantic songs that gave the evening at the office an elegant and dreamy ambience. Some employees couldn't help but move out of their desks just to watch them play on the third floor lobby of the Editorial Department.

Serenata Strings' musicians have an advantage in that many of them started with church music. Lorenz was choirmaster of several choirs and, together with son LA, spent quite a number of years with the Archangels Chorale, one of the choirs of Good Shepherd Parish in Las Piñas City.

The Chorale members' singing talents were honed by almost two decades of intensive vocal training and practice, which Lorenz considers to be important factors in maintaining musical mastery.

Musicians are given little importance, if any, in this country. But for Lorenz, "I am setting my mind to take on the mission of helping really good and gifted musicians pursue their dreams and not give up, while at the same time elevating the people's consciousness and their level of appreciation toward classical music."

SERENATA Strings

Choir launches CD

THE UP SINGING AMBASSADORS (UPSA) will launch today its very first locally released CD, "Songs of the Season I," featuring traditional selections like "Adeste Fideles (O Come All Ye Faithful)," "Angels We Have Heard on High," "Carol of the Bells," "Noche Buena"; popular and well-loved melodies like "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," "Pasko na Sinta Ko," "Kumukutikutitap," "Do You Hear What I Hear?"; modern songs like "A Christmas Carol" (ft. Scrooge), "An Evening in December," "Christmas is the Season of the Heart"; and Filipino works like "Diwa ng Pasko," "Simbang Gabi" and "Payapang Daigdig."

A bonus track—UPSA's rendition of Lester Delgado's choral arrangement of "This is the Moment," is also included.

The launch will coincide with UPSA's special performance at the Shangri-La Mall tonight at 7. Call 9249378, 0916-5015515, 0916-4972640, 0920-9283906.

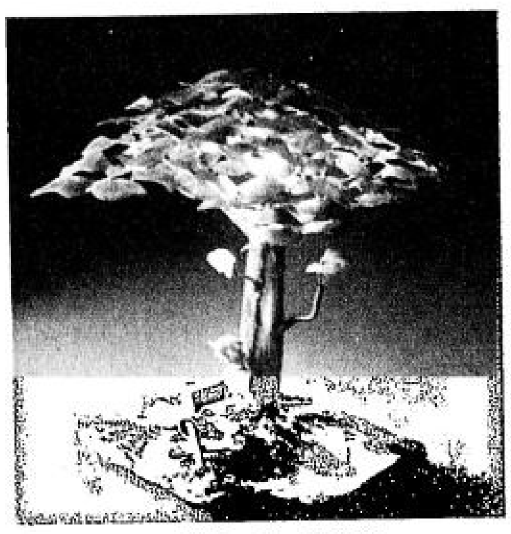
Michael Cacnio's 'Liwanag' series

THE CANVAS ART GROUP HAS launched Michael Cacnio's "Liwanag" series of limited-edition functional lamp sculptures.

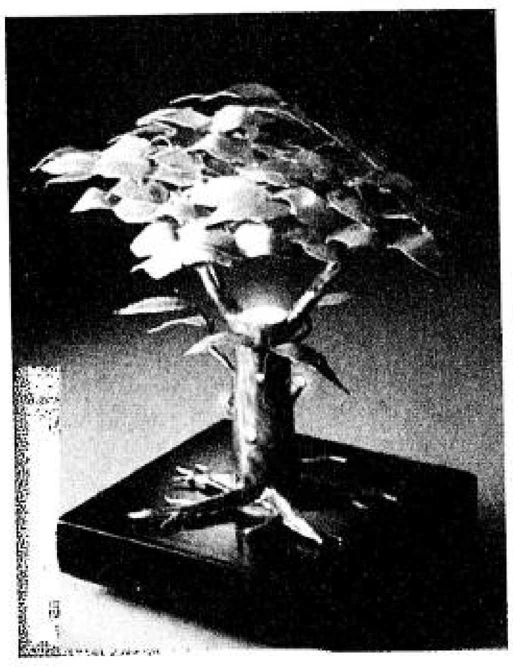
The pieces show a young boy reading under a tree.

All pieces are individually handmade to order, and will come with individually numbered certificates of authenticity.

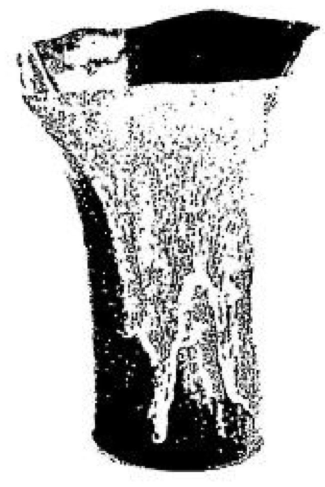
E-mail info@canvas.ph, or call or text 0917-8906160.



"TREE Lamp with Reading Child"



"TREE Lamp"



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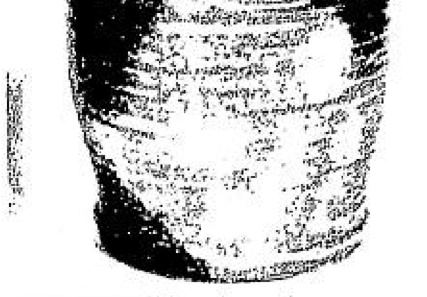

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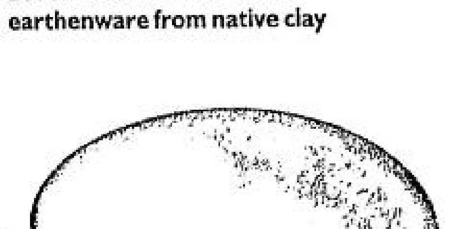

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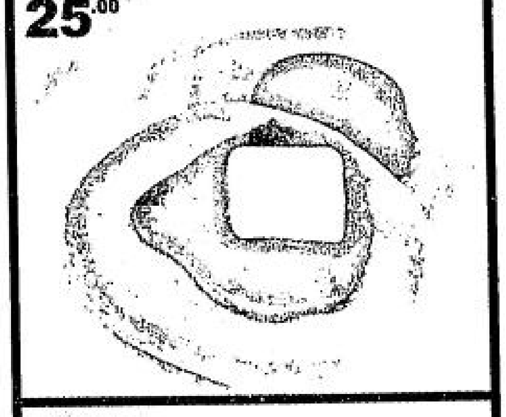

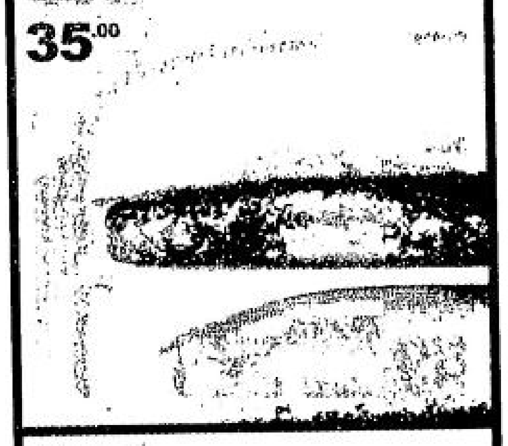

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'Windows of Legacy' pays tribute to Pinoy cultural icons

FROM THE ANCIENT *MANUNGGUL* burial jar of Palawan to the majestic rice terraces of the Cordilleras, the Philippines abounds with treasures attesting to the artistry, creativity and resourcefulness of Filipinos.

To pay tribute to the cultural icons, the Hongkong Shanghai Banking Corp. (HSBC), for its 130th anniversary, has unveiled the unique exhibit, "Windows of Legacy," which uses windows at three of its branches to highlight cultural icons that every Filipino should know.

The exhibit, which will run until Dec. 31 at the HSBC in the The Enterprise Center, RCBC and Greenhills, is being held through a partnership with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

TEXTILE—"The Art of Making Cloth," by Jeannie Goulbourn

MANUNGGUL jar—"A Spiritual Worldview and Belief in the Afterlife," by Lanelle Abueva-Fernando

For "Windows of Legacy," museum-style windows have been created to serve as display spaces. The windows are designed with a contemporary twist, with HSBC enlisting world-class Filipino artists in various disciplines to interpret the Filipino icons.

Participating artists are sculptors Impy Pilapil and Eduardo Castrillo; potter Lanelle Abueva; designers Budji Layug, Tess Pasola and Tony Gonzales of the furniture design group Movement 8; stylist Rachy Cuna; and fashion designer Jeannie Goulbourn.

"Windows of Legacy" hopes to remind viewers of national treasures to be proud of. Cultural icons and the values they represent are evidences of the unique ancient Filipino lifeways we can learn something from. We have a heritage of an ancient civilization sophisticated in its focus, style and form, similar to other world civilizations," said NCCA chair Ambeth Ocampo.

Multiawarded designers and product-design consultants Pasola and Gonzales pay tribute to the famed Banawe Rice Terraces. Their paper art finds affinity in the terraces, a monument celebrating a shared community spirit and remarkable ancient engineering ingenuity.

Designer Layug, who has successfully broken into the international furniture and design scene, hails craftsmanship in wood for "Windows of Legacy." His assigned space is devoted to the local tradition of shipbuilding and maritime trade, even before colonization.

Fashion designer Goulbourn, the pioneer in bringing Philippine silk to the high-end global market, gives a nod to the art of making cloth.

The window devoted to textile celebrates weaving, one of the most precious living traditions that reflect the dexterity of the Filipina's hand and the genius of imagination.

Sculptor Castrillo, responsible for many historical monuments in handcrafted brass found all over the country, presents a narrative in metal inspired by the ancient Laguna copper plate inscription.

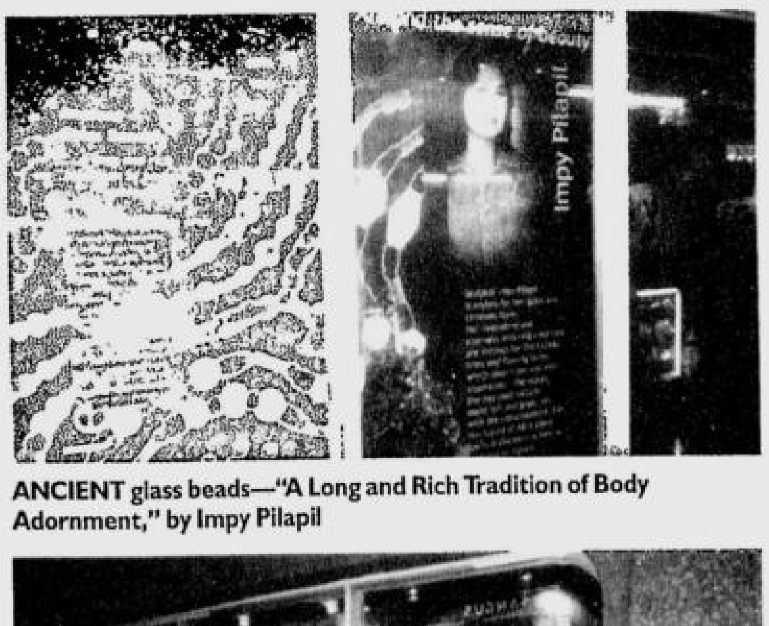
Designer/artist/stylist Cuna creates designs characterized by an opulence and ornate sensibility within a context of celebration. For "Windows of Legacy," he gives a nod to the indigenous Southern Mindanao motifs.

The Muslim Philippine culture predominant in the South is characterized by ornate curvilinear designs and motifs, bright and bold colors—traditional motifs like the *okir* (*sarimanok*, *naga* and *pako rabong*). These dynamic forms, coupled with warm colors, reflect the sunny, positive disposition of Filipinos.

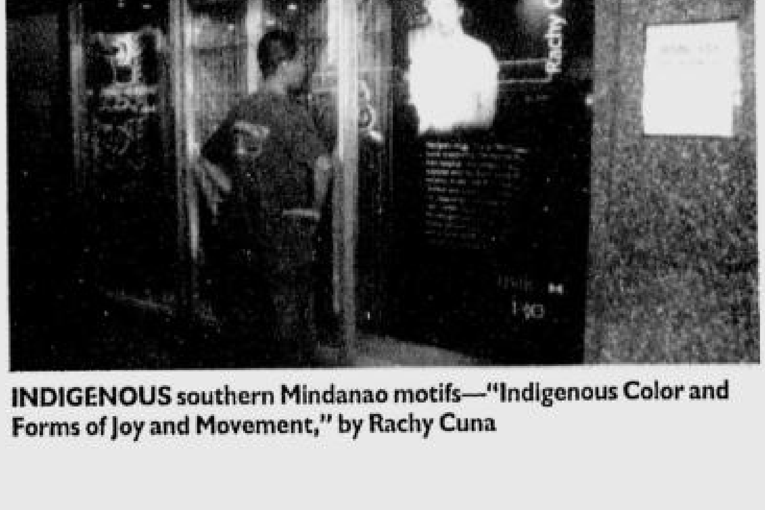
Sculptor/printmaker Pilapil merged graphic statements in her glass sculptures mixed with other natural materials. In focusing on ancient glass beads, she extols the long and rich tradition of body adornment.

Potter Abueva-Fernando highlights the *manunggul* jar and a spiritual-world view it represents.

LAGUNA copper plate inscription—"Narratives in Metal," by Eduardo Castrillo



ANCIENT glass beads—"A Long and Rich Tradition of Body Adornment," by Impy Pilapil


INDIGENOUS southern Mindanao motifs—"Indigenous Color and Forms of Joy and Movement," by Rachy Cuna

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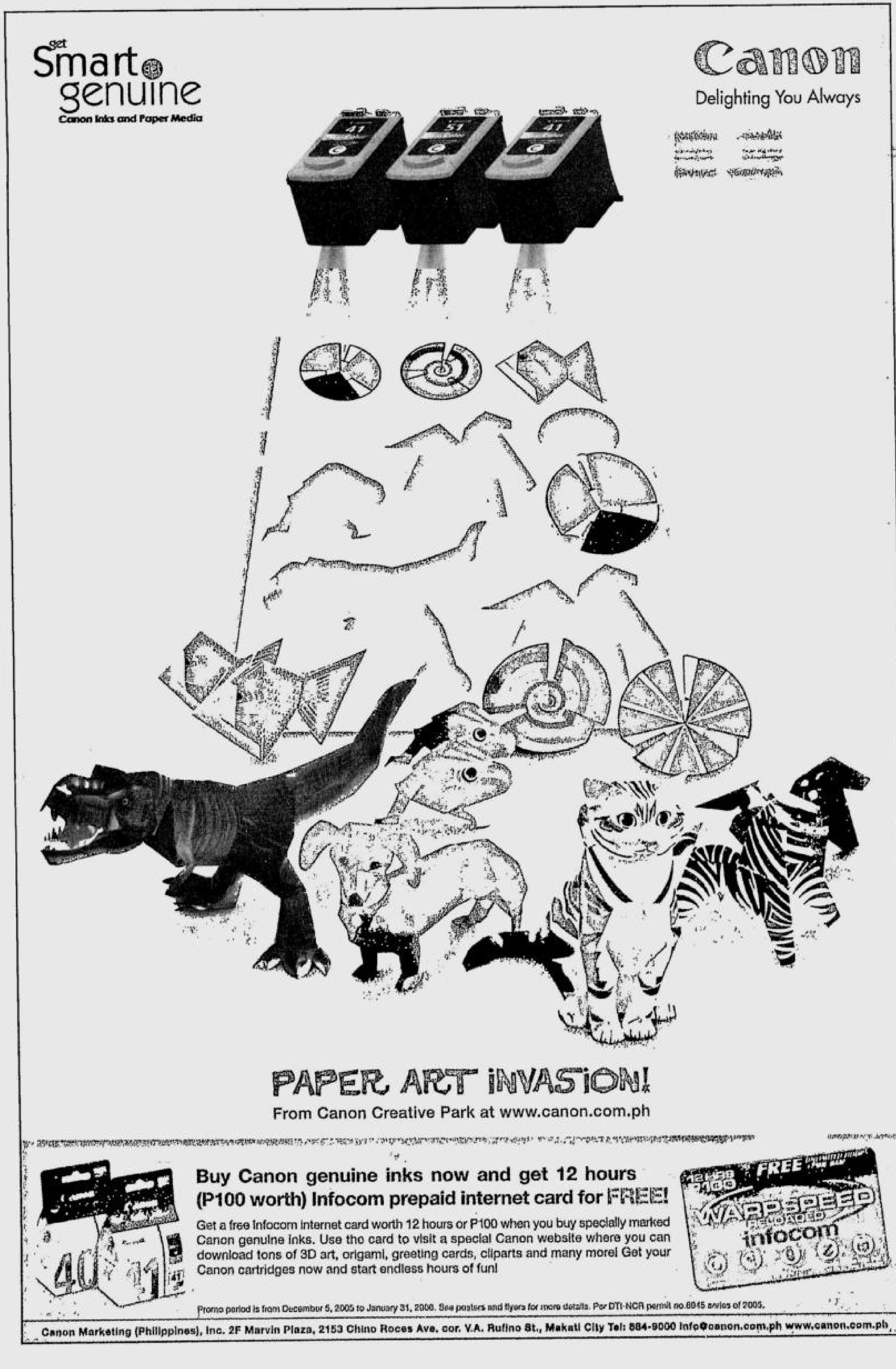
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NOEL Escondo and Catherine Racsag as the young lovers in Tanghalang Pilipino's "R'meo Luvs Dew-lhiett"

BEST OF THEATER 2005

Bravo!

By Gibbs Cadiz

MENCHU Lauchengco-Yulo and Michael Williams in Repertory Philippines' "Man of La Mancha"

AND THE TONY GOES to...

Oh, never mind. We don't have the equivalent of the Tony Awards here, and don't get us started on the Aliw Awards.

Yet if there's any artistic community that needs legitimate and consistent recognition, it's local theater. It has given the country and the world Lea Salonga and so many other first-rate artists.

HK Disneyland wouldn't be as magical without its Filipino actors, dancers and performers, many of them products of the country's ever-struggling theater companies. Next year, "Miss Saigon" is opening in

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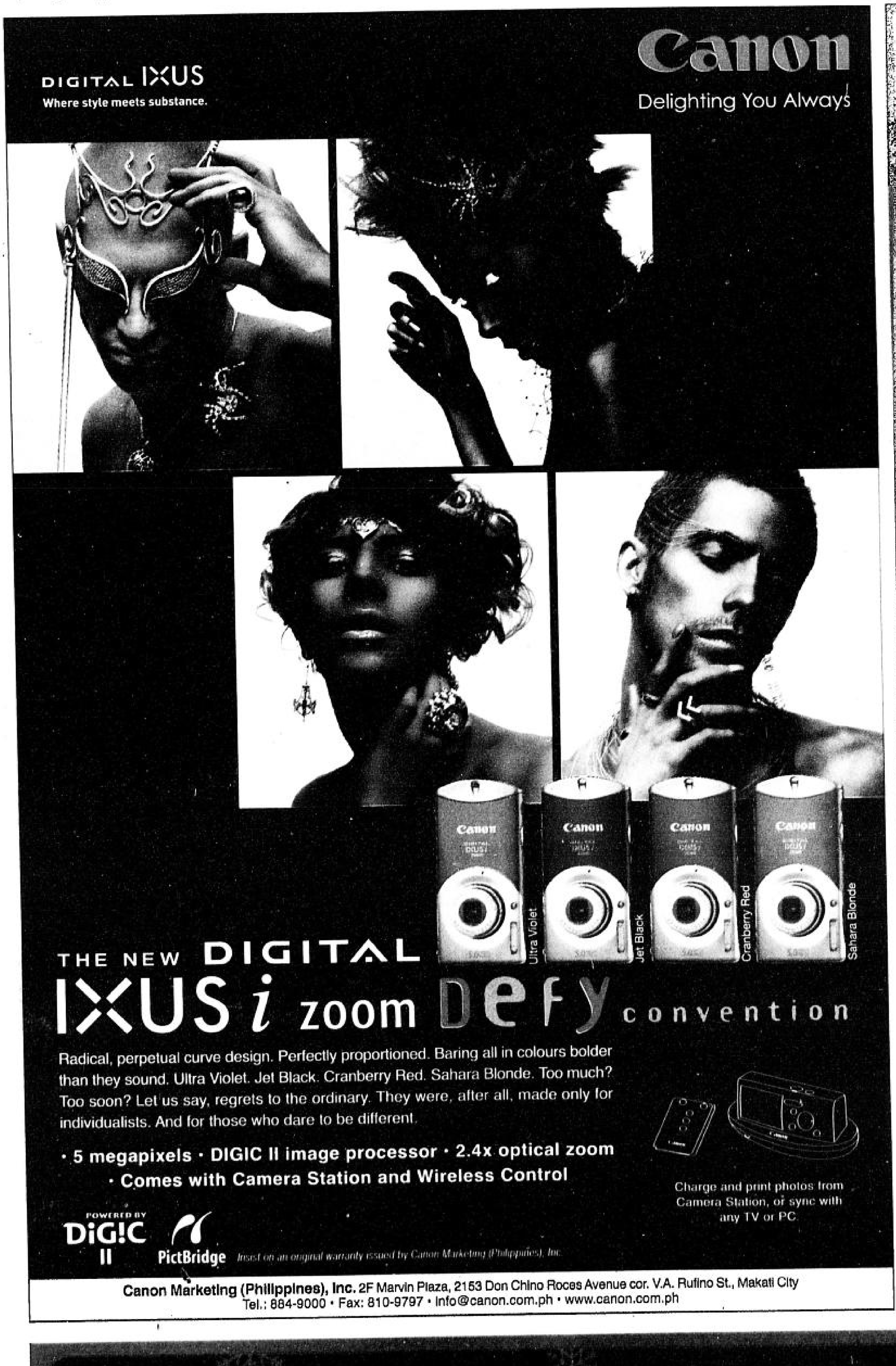

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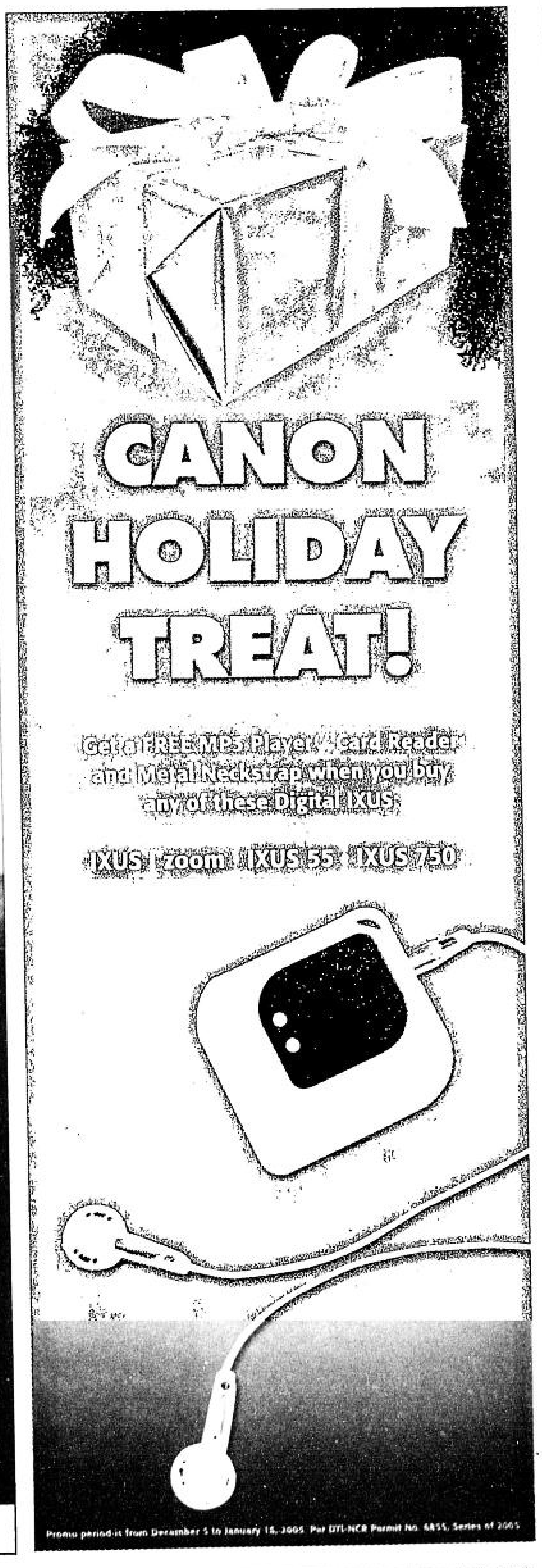

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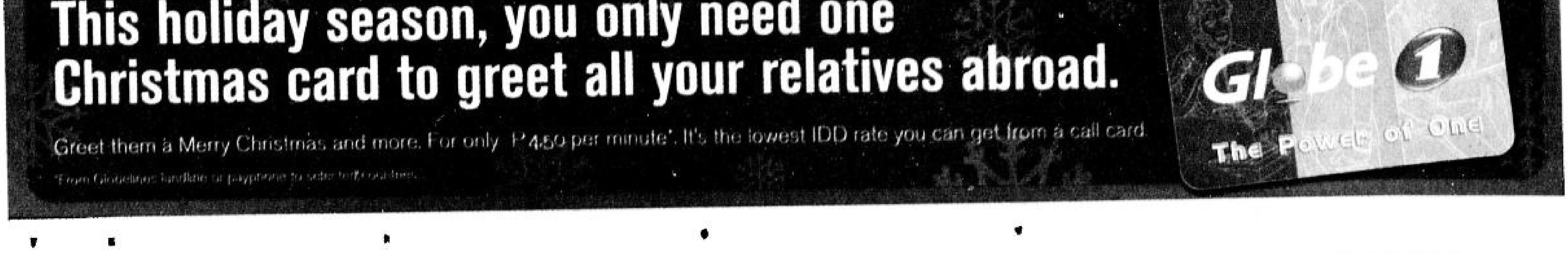

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Globe 1
The Power of One

Bravo!

From page E1

South Korea, and guess where they're looking for the main cast?

While Philippine cinema with its brighter stars, hordes of fans and surfeit of awards bodies is floundering, theater is—dare we say it—doing okay, despite waves of performers leaving for other shores because of chronic starvation pay and widespread public indifference here.

This year, that exodus was felt acutely in the sudden decimation of the ranks of promising theater actors, many of whom were already poised to become the industry's leading lights a few more productions down the road.

The lack of viable musical leading men, for instance, was highlighted when Atlantis Productions' "Beauty and the Beast" had to pair a radiantly youthful KC Concepcion with a mature Jett Pangan, and when Actors' Actors Inc.'s "Once on This Island"—an otherwise topnotch production—ended up with pop singer Jeffrey Hidalgo struggling in the role of Daniel.

While stage matinee idols with confident voices, dashing looks and the marquee names to match—like Noel Rayos and Roy Rolloda, now both in HK Disneyland (and who, incidentally, were among the few actors who could effortlessly switch from English to Filipino plays)—are hard to find, local theater has an abundance of male actors of a character bent.

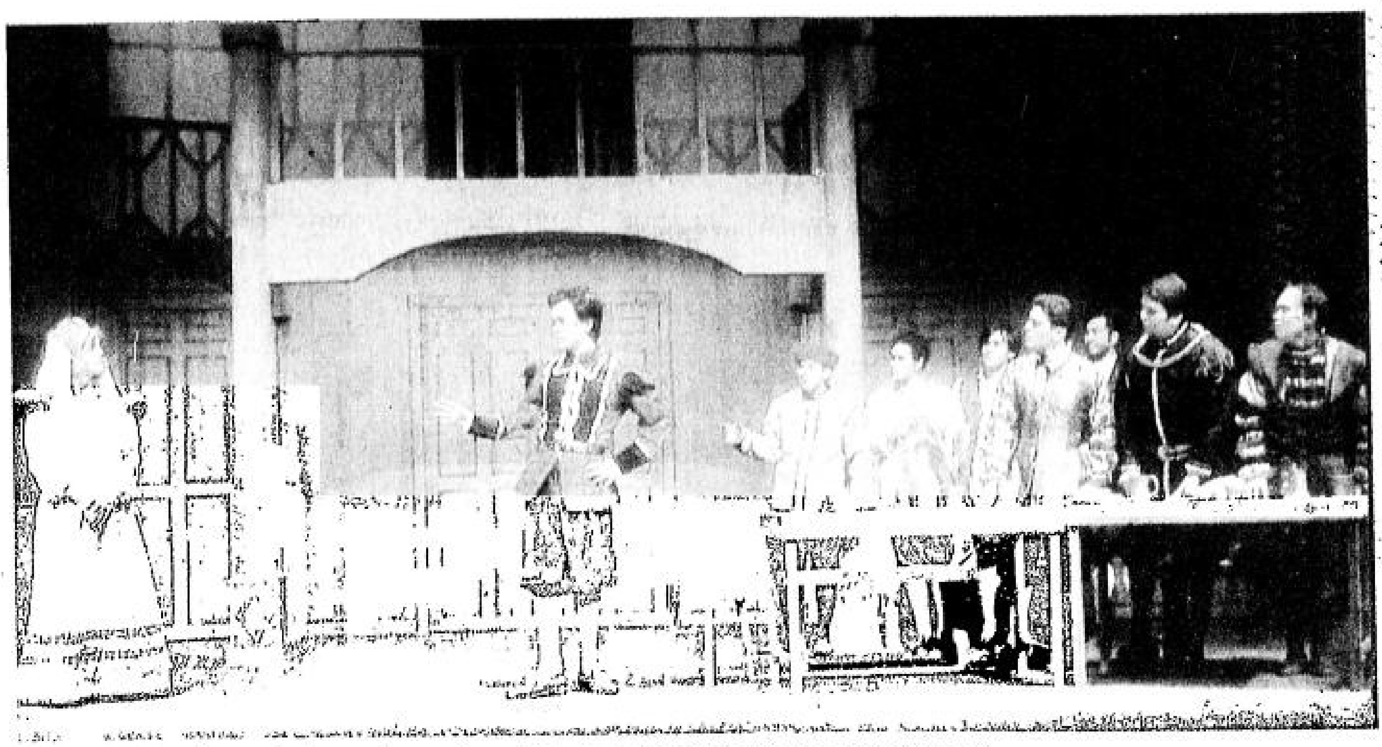
Thus, it could stage two large all-male productions in one year—Rep's "The Taming of the Shrew" and Peta's "Romulus D'Grayt"—and still leaves quite a number waiting in the wings.

Kinks like this have not dampened the industry, which continues to mount plays and musicals in sometimes dizzying succession. The quality of the shows is uneven, no question about that. But the passion and belief in the possibilities of homegrown theater are unassailable.

Such hard work and commitment, so quickly forgotten by the audience after curtain call, deserve encouragement.

Here's our two cents' worth on the best of local theater (or more precisely Manila theater, since we don't get to check out the provincial circuit regularly) in 2005.

MARIO O'Hara, Irma Adlawan and Paolo Rodriguez in TP's "Ang Pokpok ng Ohio"



NICCOLO Manahan and other cast members of Rep's all-male "The Taming of the Shrew"

Best Actor-Play

Mario O'Hara ("Ang Pokpok ng Ohio"). If Manila were London and he had it his way, Nonon Padilla once said, Mario O'Hara would be Sir Mario O'Hara today. "Ang Pokpok ng Ohio" was a reminder why. Playing a derelict at the end of his sexual and emotional ropes, O'Hara gave an indelible performance, the kind that sent temblors up and down your spine.

Honorable mentions: Jamie Wilson ("Frozen"), Dido Dela Paz ("Romulus D'Grayt"), Nonie Buencamino ("Ang Palasyo ni Valentin"), Paolo Rodriguez ("Ang Pokpok ng Ohio"), Noel Escondo ("R'meo Luvs Dew-lhiett"), Niccolo Manahan ("The Taming of the Shrew")

Best Actress-Play

Roselyn Perez ("Frozen"). She may have lucked out in the subsequent musical "Aspects of Love," but in "Frozen" Perez was bravura personified as a British mother coming to terms with the violent death of her daughter. Best moment: that mesmerizing scene where she painted a wall to distract herself. No wall there, but with Perez's intensity, you could have sworn there was.

Honorable mentions: Irma Adlawan ("Ang Pokpok ng Ohio"), Jenny Jamora ("The Blue Room"), Catherine Racsag ("R'meo Luvs Dew-lhiett"), Mailes Kanapi ("Sepharad")

NOR Domingo and Dido Dela Paz lead the all-male cast of Peta's "Romulus D'Grayt."

Best Featured Actor-Play

Cris Pasturan ("R'meo Luvs Dew-lhiett"). Young, nervy, exuberant, Pasturan exploded on the stage like a runaway firecracker as the rapping, wisecracking Mercutio in TP's *jologs* version of Shakespeare's play on young love. He stole every scene he was in, that when he exited midway through he was sorely missed.

Honorable mentions: Topper Fabregas ("The Taming of the Shrew"), Nor Domingo and Manuel Aquino ("Romulus D'Grayt"), Ronnie Lazaro ("Misa"), Soliman Cruz ("El Filibusterismo")

LEO Rialp

Best Featured Actress-Play

Wenah Nagales ("R'meo Luvs Dew-lhiett"). Juliet's nanny, a minor character in the Bard's play, mutated into a riot of a *yaya* in Nagales' raucous, raunchy hands. The audience practically had to pick itself off the floor when she shrieked at Mercutio: "*Wala pang amag ang tahong ko, pres pa ito, pres!*"

Honorable mentions: Tess Jamias ("R'meo Luvs Dew-lhiett"), Madeleine Nicolas ("Misa")

Best Play

"R'meo Luvs Dew-lhiett" (Herbie Go, dir.). Go and JV Villareal's transmutation of the immortal play into a tacky, scruffy version of itself was a triumph of imagination, boldly scraping away the starch off "Romeo and Juliet" to reveal the grit, violence and savagery laying siege to its tender heart.

"The Taming of the Shrew" (Bart Guingona, dir.). Rep's all-male "The Taming of the Shrew" was noteworthy as much for the way it made Shakespeare's gender-problematic play palatable, as for its refusal to wink down and turn its cross-dressing conceit into a drag show. The result was a tart, tingly cocktail of Elizabethan one-upmanship, with Topper Fabregas' fetching Bianca as the cherry on top.

Honorable mentions: "Ang Pokpok ng Ohio" (José Estrella, dir.), "Frozen" (Rito Asilo, dir.)

Best Actor-Musical

Michael Williams ("Man of La Mancha"). Williams' plush baritone and deft way with song and character (in this case, three) breathed new life to "The Impossible Dream," and gave "Man of La Mancha" both

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THE UST Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Herminigildo Rañera

PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

Classical Christmas concert on campus

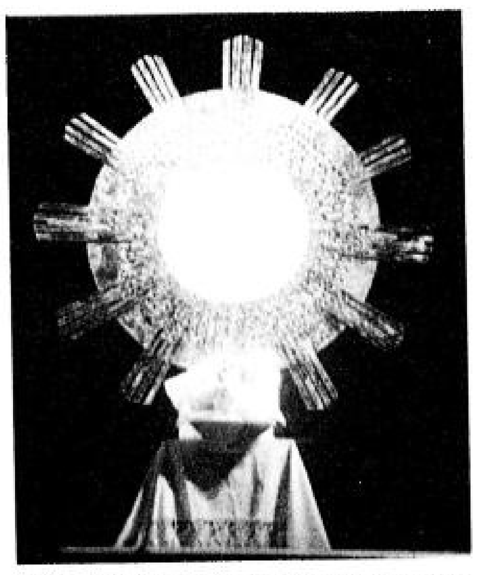
UST musters its rich lineup of superlative musical talents for a magical night of Christmas tunes

By Amadís Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

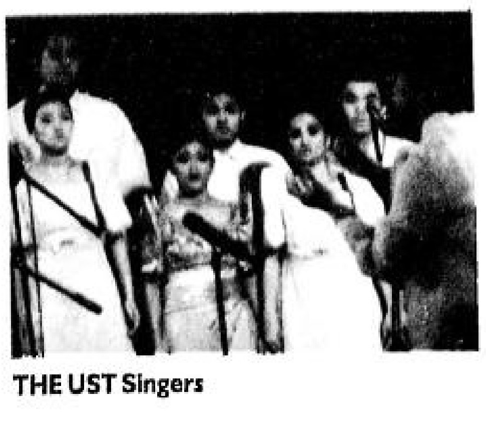
THE CAMPUS OF THE UNIversity of Santo Tomas was beautifully lighted. Uniformed students were out in full force, enjoying the breeze, chatting, a few flirting and laughing, and partaking of the *puto bumbong*, special *bibingka* and other Christmas delicacies in the food stalls.

A holiday spirit prevailed.

It was just the right time for "Yuletide Tunes: UST 2005 Christmas Concert," as the pontifical university put its best foot forward and mustered its lineup of superlative musical talents: soloists, musicians, conductors and arrangers, pianists, dance troupes and choirs.



THE INFANT Jesus with the Aquinian sun in the background

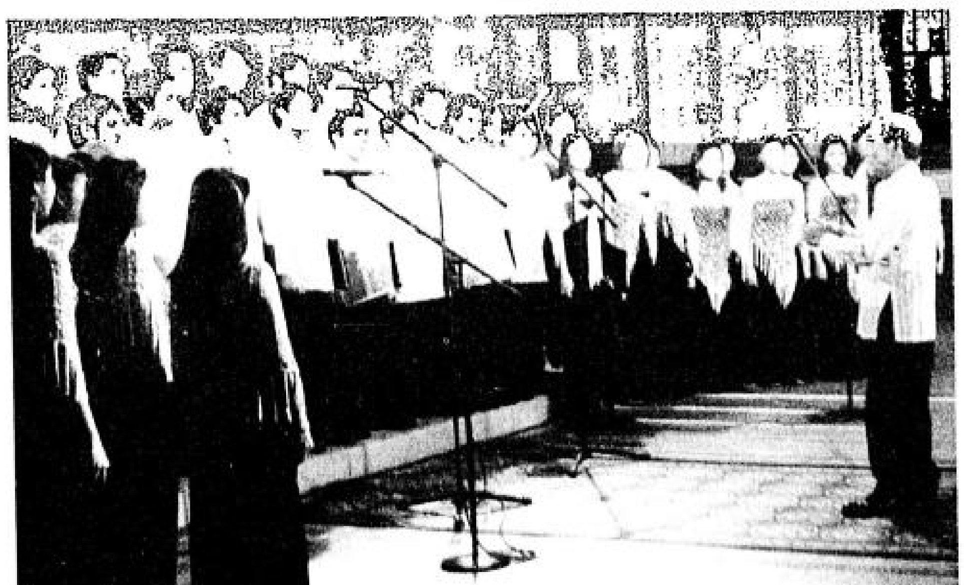


THE UST Singers

The venue was the big UST Chapel, which was also gaily decorated for the occasion.

A video presentation, "Christmas Through the Ages," set the tone, with attractive host Susan Christiansen, attired in an elegant *baro't saya*, giving the background to each cluster of compositions. The UST Symphony Band, led by Arnel Feliciano, whetted the audience's appetite.

Then there was a surprising "rap-*jologs*" number by a young male singer backed up by the UST Percussion Ensemble. Mercifully, the lyrics in Filipino were religious in meaning and appropriate for the season. The big UST Grade School Choir charmed the crowd.



THE CORO Tomasino

TENOR Lemuel de la Cruz and soprano Rachelle Gerodias

Herminigildo Rañera conducted the top-of-the-line UST Symphony Orchestra, the only campus orchestra in the country, as pianist Raul Sunico, who is also dean of the UST Conservatory of Music, attacked the keyboards. There was the vocal artistry of foremost soprano Rachelle Gerodias, "*walang kupas*" Gloria Dizon Coronel of the Tribung Pinoy Foundation, and in-demand tenor Lemuel de la Cruz (who seems to have reinvented his appearance). All three are voice faculty of the Conservatory.

Dance as an art form was represented by the Salinggawi Dance Troupe, the long-reigning champion of the cheerdance contest of the UAAP. Coro Tomasino, directed by Ricardo Mazo, proved once more it is an excellent choir. The "Choir of the World" UST Singers ("UST's pride," cheered Christiansen), honed by Fidel Calalang Jr., did not disappoint their fans.

The finale was rousing, with San Pedro's "Simbang Gabi," De Leon's appealing but difficult-to-interpret (you cannot pause or breathe while singing it) "Payapang Daigdig," and "Joy to the World" by the whole company.

The UST Christmas Concert was staged in cooperation with the Associated Broadcasting Company. It will be telecast on Channel 5 on Dec. 22 at 4:30 p.m

With its varied numbers, the concert served to uplift one's spirits, as we await the Birth.

Cue the drumroll! These artists made theater-going a privilege this year

the delicacy and heft it needed to overcome the cornball yarn at its core.

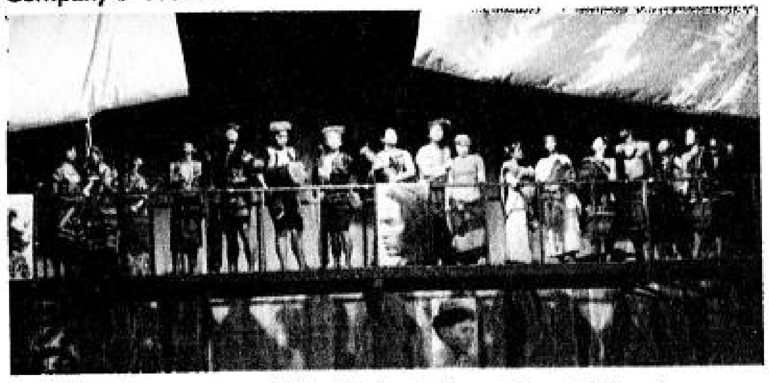
Honorable mentions: Arnold Reyes and Miguel Castro ("St. Louis Loves Dem Filipinos"), Jake Macapagal ("Aspects of Love"), Jon Joven ("Noli Me Tangere"), Jay-R ("Footloose")

Best Actress-Musical

Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo ("Man of La Mancha"). In Lauchengco-Yulo's sublime turn as Aldonza/Dulcinea, actress and character came together in one of the brightest, most fully realized creations one saw in local musical theater in years—a performance that deserves to be remembered as both a high point and a benchmark.

Honorable mentions: Monique Wilson ("Aspects of Love"), Liesl Batucan ("Little Shop of Horrors"), Raki Vega ("Once on This Island"), Angeli Bayani ("Noli Me Tangere")

JENNY Jamora, Jamie Wilson and Roselyn Perez in New Voice Company's "Frozen"



A SCENE from Dulaang UP's "St. Louis Loves Dem Filipinos"

Best Featured Actor-Musical

Leo Rialp ("Aspects of Love"). Rialp has made a career out of aging on stage, sometimes wisely, as in "St. Louis Loves Dem Filipinos," sometimes sorrowfully, as in "Aspects of Love." Nowhere was his suavity more useful than in "Aspects," where his morally suspect character had soaked up the most sympathy by the end.

Honorable mentions: Audie Gemora ("Footloose"), Leo Rialp ("St. Louis Loves Dem Filipinos"), Jett Pangan and Bodjie Pascua ("Once on This Island"), Nazer Salcedo and Rody Vera ("Noli Me Tangere"), Gian Magdangal ("Footloose")

Best Featured Actress-Musical

Agot Isidro ("Footloose"). Isidro continues to surprise with her occasional musical-theater outings. Good in "Baby," she was even better in "Footloose," expertly uncovering the pain and regret behind a preacher wife's cheery façade with her expressive singing and line delivery.

Honorable mentions: Bituin Escalante, May Bayot and Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo ("Once on This Island"), Pinky Marquez ("Beauty and the Beast"), Mae Ann Valentin ("St. Louis Loves Dem Filipinos"), Cynthia Culig-Guico ("Noli Me Tangere")

Best Musical

"Man of La Mancha" (Baby Barredo, dir.) The musical chestnut about a knight-errant running where the brave dare not go was Rep's glowing tribute to its founder, Zeneida Amador. But it also became the company's way of sallying forth and reclaiming its position as the ace purveyor of Broadway fare hereabouts—an aim it accomplished with aplomb.

Honorable mentions: "Once on This Island" (Bart Guingona, dir.), "St. Louis Loves Dem Filipinos" (Alex Cortez, dir.), "Aspects of Love" (Monique Wilson, dir.)

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph

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- Use bulbs of lower wattage for your Christmas light fixtures so you can save on your electric bill.

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- Don't leave the Christmas tree switched on and candles lighted overnight to prevent fires.
- Keep flammable objects away from your Christmas tree. All incandescent light sources, no matter how small they are, produce heat and can cause fires.

It is not the number of Christmas lights you have on that make for a bright Christmas. It is the light in our hearts that glows the brightest.

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MERALCO

Pavarotti dedicates 'Ave Maria' to a world without peace

By Nancy T. Lu
Contributor

LESS THAN TWO WEEKS before Christmas, visiting top Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti's thoughts were of a Christmas reunion with his family.

He had been on his Asian farewell tour in recent weeks. Taichung in central Taiwan, where he gave an open-air concert at the Taichung Sports Stadium last Dec. 10, was his final stop.

"From here, I will go to New York where I will be joined by my wife, Nicoletta [Mantovani], and my daughter, Alice," revealed Pavarotti, back for a second Taiwan visit after 15 years. "We will spend Christmas and New Year in New York."

The 70-year-old doting father said: "I have been receiving pictures of my charming daughter on my computer every day. I don't even need to bring her picture with me. I get to see how she's doing and even what she's wearing. I am also able to hear her calling out to me, 'Papa, Papa!'"

Asked if he has any Christmas wish, Pavarotti replied: "It has been my privilege to be a man of peace for the United Nations. Therefore, I should not desire anything else but wish peace for the world."

He posed a question: "Are we going to have peace in this world?" He answered in the next breath: "That's not likely. But that is my wish for the world."

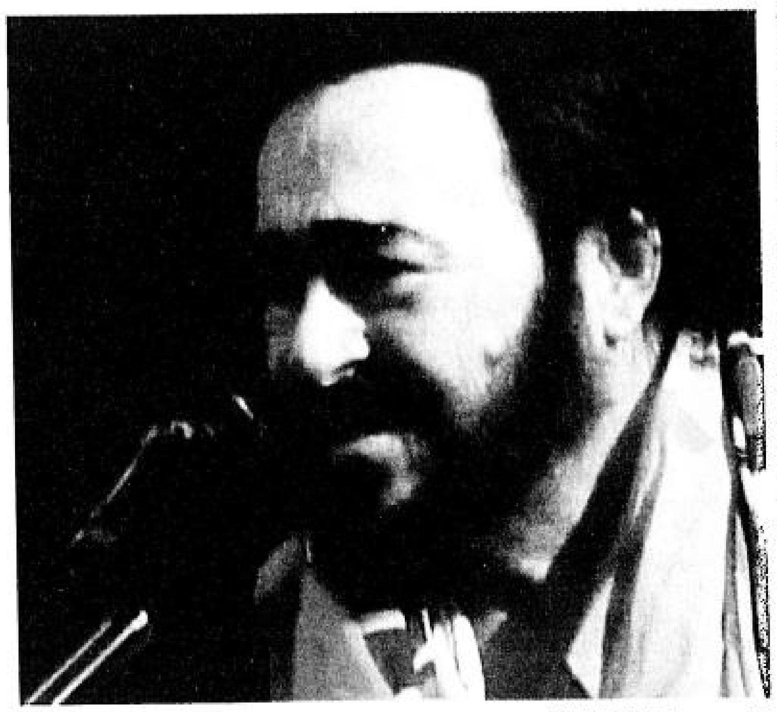
His "Pavarotti and Friends" concerts over the years have been organized to raise money for the children who have been victims of wars and conflicts in different parts of the world. He has involved pop and rock stars in the concert series.

Halfway through his Taichung concert, Pavarotti and Annalisa Raspagliosi, the soprano he brought with him to Taiwan, vocalized Schubert's "Ave Maria."

> In his Asian farewell tour, the tenor said he would retire but would continue learning

"I dedicate it to a world without peace," he said. The solemn and peaceful number reminded listeners of the approaching Christmas.

What a difference 15 years had made. At his concert at the National Concert Hall in Taipei 15 years ago, Pavarotti stepped out on his own without any problem. He held his trademark white kerchief and showed a lot of bravura then.



LUCIANO Pavarotti

About 20,000 people, who turned up to watch the open-air performance in Taichung this time, saw Pavarotti sit through the entire concert. The promoter had ordered a special electric buggy for him to conveniently use in going up the stage and in moving around.

Somehow the retiring Italian tenor seemed to have lost some of his magic as a legendary tenor, failing to stimulate exciting vibrations across the stadium. Applause was forthcoming after each song. However, missing were the thundering and reverberating emotions.

Familiar encores

The three familiar encores had the crowd warm up a bit to the tenor. Pavarotti dedicated "Granada" to the city of Taichung and Mayor Jason Hu for inviting him to sing there during his Asian farewell tour.

When he burst into "O Sole Mio," the audience got worked up a bit. Then he invited everyone to sing the chorus part in "The Drinking Song" from "La Traviata."

"You can sing what you like," he called out to his spectators and listeners. "You can even insult your neighbor. But, please, don't clap."

Of his first Taiwan visit years ago, Pavarotti recalled with amusement: "At that time I had just released an album titled 'Tutto Pavarotti (Totally Pavarotti).' At the end of the concert, people came to my dressing room and addressed me as Mr. Tutto, thinking it was my name."

Pavarotti learned about Taichung Mayor Hu impersonating him in singing "O Sole Mio" in a pre-election commercial. Taichung recently held its mayoralty election. The Modena-born tenor, known as "King of High C" due to his ability to sing and hold high notes, reacted with amusement, saying that he would remember that.

Pavarotti arrived in Taichung in his 10-seat private plane. With him were four of his personal friends. He hardly left his hotel suite, choosing to play cards with his buddies to while away the time.

He had two rehearsals with the Evergreen Symphony Orchestra. He was usually in a good mood, making funny noises with his lips sometimes instead of singing his lines. Pavarotti flew in from Beijing via Jeju, South Korea.

When Pavarotti first appeared to meet the press, he was supported on both sides by his bodyguards. He wore a brimmed white hat. Around his neck and over his shoulders, he threw a very colorful scarf.

"You can see that I protect my voice with the scarf," he said. "I also stay away from bad weather." But actually a drizzle at the start of his Taichung concert made everyone put on raincoats.

As for his quitting his concert career, Pavarotti quipped that he has been asked too many times to explain his decision.

"I am now beginning to think that maybe I am wrong in making up my mind about this," he said.

But then again, Pavarotti declared: "I think that it is time to stop after 44 years. I will probably make a little extension to 2006 or 2007."

Pavarotti, the son of a baker, started out as a primary-school teacher. He even made a living at one point as an insurance underwriter.

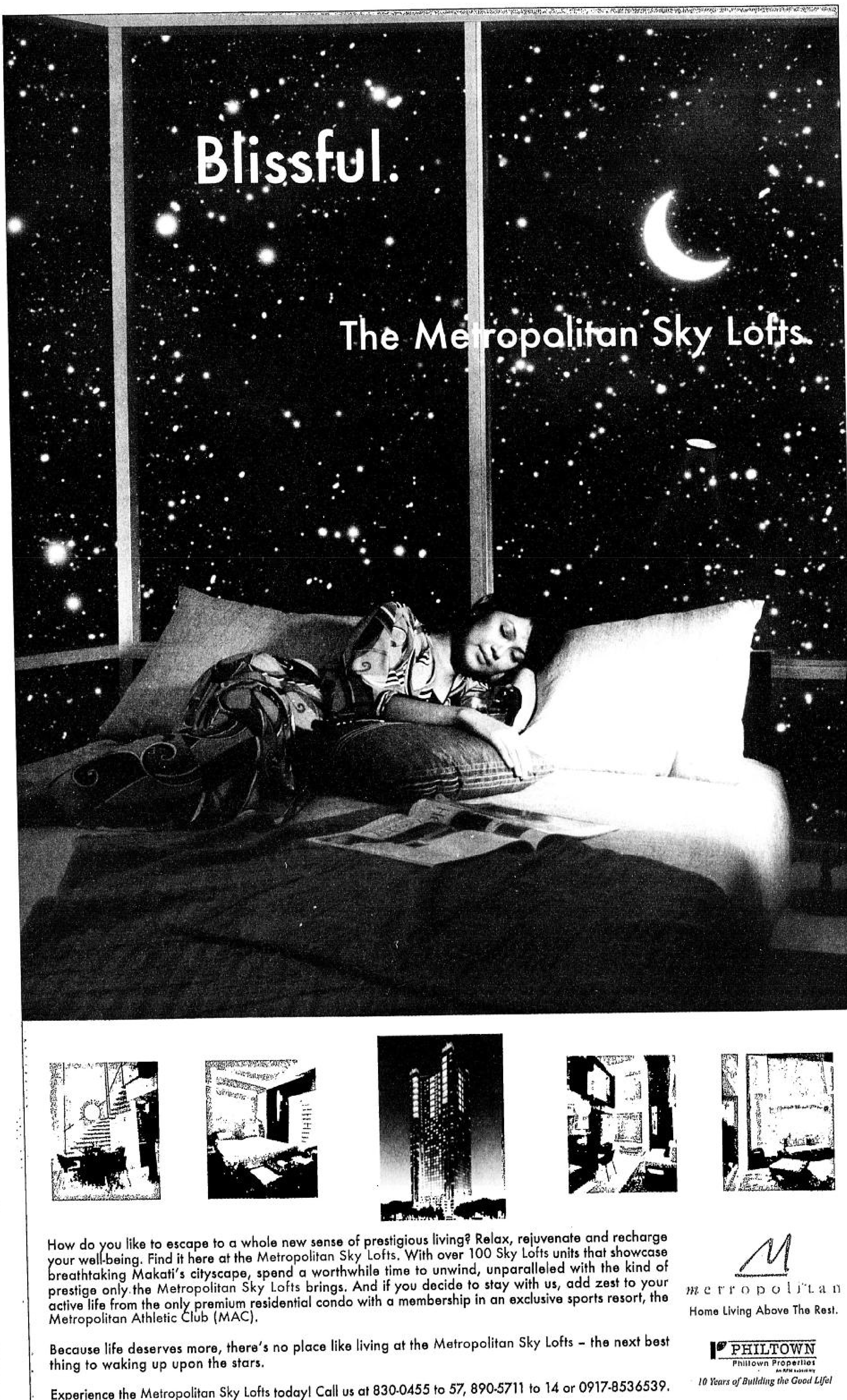
But his career took a big turn after he won first prize at the Reggio Emilia International Singing Competition in 1961. This great admirer of tenors Enrico Caruso and Giuseppe di Stefano caught attention when he reprised the role of Rodolfo in "La Boheme" that same year.

Pavarotti revealed he had been adjusting to a life away from the stage. He has begun teaching. He is going back to his hobby of painting. He is also catching up on his reading. But above all, he is spending more time with his little daughter, born two years ago.

Pavarotti showed much self-confidence, having made a great impact as a world-class tenor.

"You can't confuse me with another singer," he pointed out. "When my father died at the age of 90, he still had an enchanting sweet voice. My voice is like his. Add to that my personality."

As for the reason of his enduring and great success, he summed it up this way before his big Taiwan performance: "I am studying today. Tomorrow I will be studying. On the day of the concert, I will also be studying. I am an eternal student."



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Gifts for literate gourmets and gourmands

By Vangie Baga-Reyes

OH, GREAT, YOU'RE SAYING TO yourself: Gift-giving time, again! Seems not too long you were eating and drinking too much and recovering from the stress of excessive shopping.

But, as there's no getting away from the season for giving, you can lessen the stress by keeping in mind one very important thing—who you're buying for. That's how you find things that people really need even though they don't know it. And that's the best kind of gift.

Books are usually safe bets, and if the recipient loves to eat (who doesn't?) or enjoy cooking or both, then you can't miss with food books.

Here are some gift ideas for those who love cooking and eating and reading.

'Cultural Foods Around the World'

By Virginia Serraon-Claudio, Lourdes Serraon-Joves and Adela Jamorabo-Ruiz

Published by National Book Store

This book is written for gourmet enthusiasts, students, instructors, professionals, chefs, and lay people who want to know more about food culture and culinary arts of different countries, such as Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahamas, Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, Hungary, Lebanon, Peru, Scotland, Turkey and Ukraine.

Students and faculty of courses on food service systems, hotel and restaurant and institutional management, nutrition and dietetics, food technology and home economics may find the comprehensive book useful.

It also provides selected international recipes, including national dishes.

"Filipino Cooking and Entertaining Here and Abroad"

By Eleanor R. Laquian

Published by National Book Store

The book offers more healthful variations of popular Filipino dishes. About 500 recipes with the unique taste and appeal of traditional home cooking are cooking. This is not a diet book but a book on food awareness. It explains why some aspects of Filipino cooking are unhealthy and what to do to minimize health hazards.

The chapter "Entertaining, Fil-

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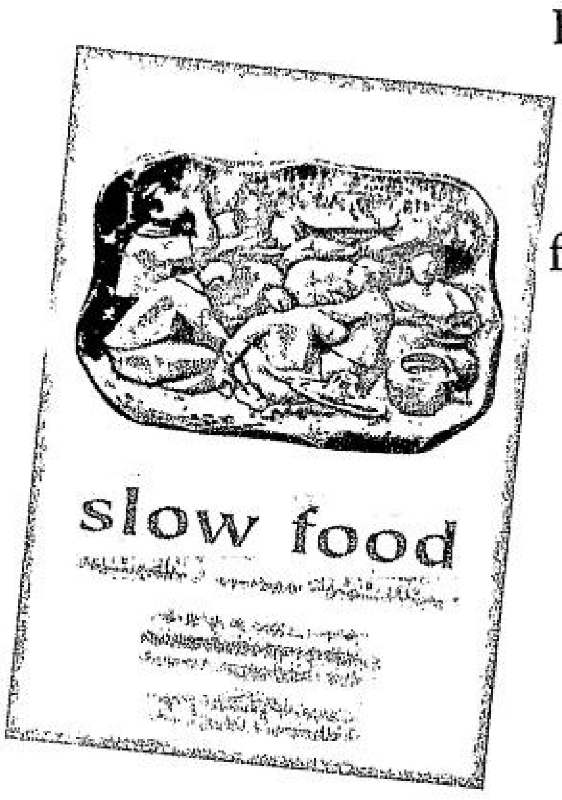

Books are usually safe bets for people who love to eat (who doesn't?) or enjoy cooking or both

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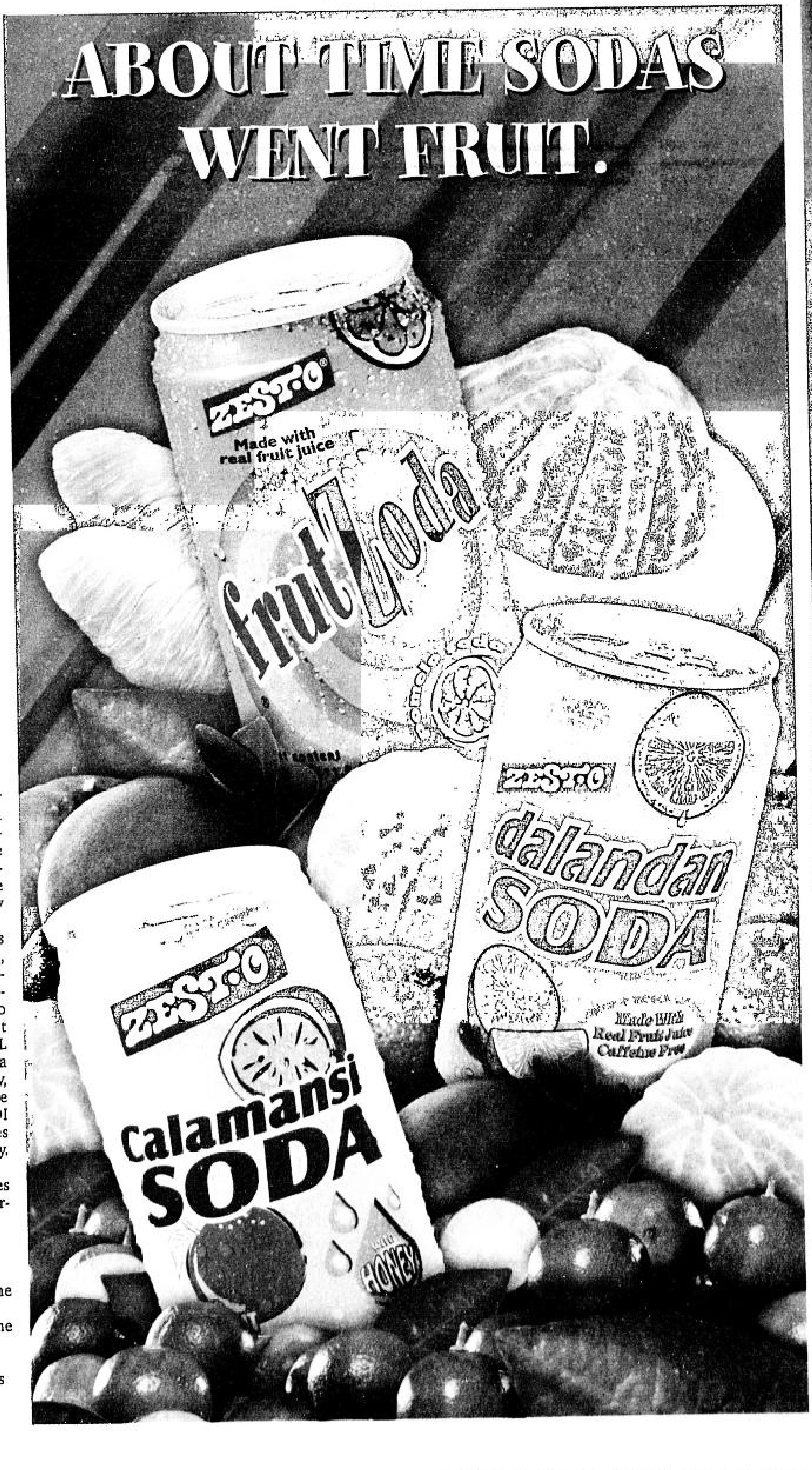
In connection with the Philippine Daily INQUIRER's 20th anniversary, get a chance to win P3,000 PowerBooks gift certificates and be featured in the INQUIRER's pages by writing about the power of reading.

1. In 150 words or less, write about how reading that book has inspired you to see life in a new way. Has it motivated you to start your own business? Challenged you to switch careers? Or changed you for the better?

2. Submit your entry together with a photo of you holding or reading the book at the Customer Service counter of any PowerBooks branch. Photos should be in 4R size, and printed on photo paper or submitted on a CD. Mail to or drop off at PowerBooks, 2/L Greenbelt 4, Ayala Center, Makati City, or the Philippine Daily INQUIRER, PDI Bldg., Chino Roces Ave., Makati City. Call 6315939.

3. All entries must follow the format:
- Name
- Age
- Date of Birth
- Telephone number
- Cell phone number
- Home address
- E-mail address
- Title of book
- Write-up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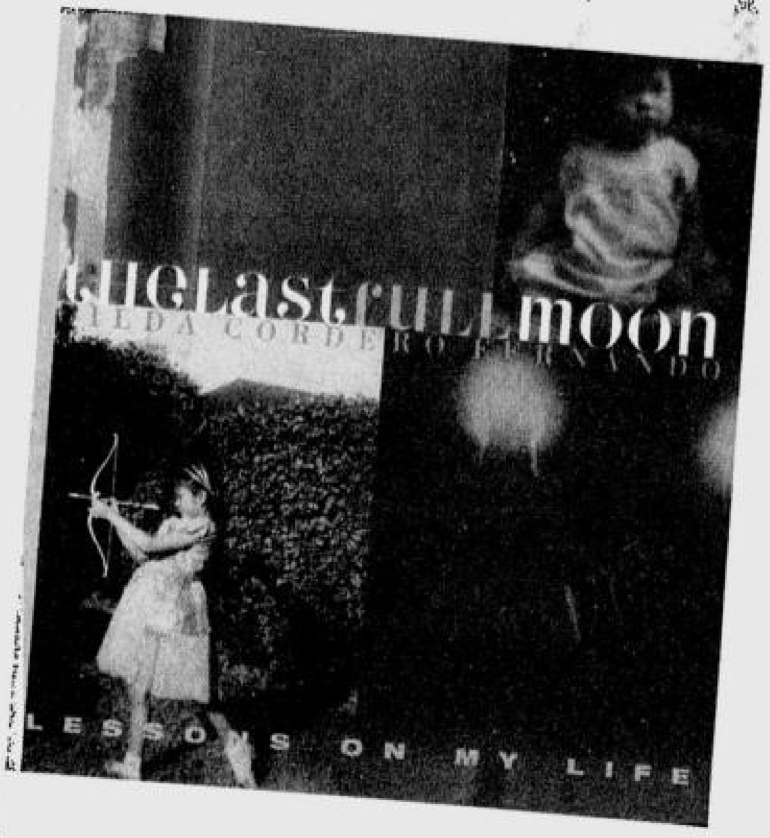
A record of her passage

By Amadís Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

"The Last Full Moon: Lessons on My Life"
By Gilda Cordero Fernando
UP Press, 2005. 245 pages



DURING THE 1950s—HALF A lifetime ago—there were three leading practitioners of the Filipino short story in English, who came after the generation of Nick Joaquin, NVM Gonzalez, et al.: Gregorio C. Brillantes, Atenean; Wilfrido D. Nolledo, Thomasian; and Gilda Cordero Fernando, Theresian.

Nolledo has since passed on but Brillantes and Cordero-Fernando, two sexy senior citizens, are still very much around. Brillantes has published collections of stories and essays in recent years, while Cordero-Fernando has just launched the book under review—48 essays, and an excerpt from a prize-winning short story.

Except for a few published in the INQUIRER, the essays are new, and go backward and forward in time, although in general the sequence is chronological. The author begins with her childhood in Quiapo, Manila, and ends with thoughts on immortality during her senior moments.

Most of the essays are personal stuff, reflecting the author's experiences, and that of her family and friends, through the years and decades. But the temper of the times, of the period in question, is often present.

Remarkably candid is "The Soap Opera," a profile of the author's mother, a softhearted woman who, nevertheless, had a terrible temper. She would throw things, fight with her husband (whom she loved to distraction), and traumatize her daughter (who was an only child for 13 years).

Gilda was the apple of her father's eye, while her younger sister was closer to their mother. The two sisters grew up not knowing each other very well until late in life, when they undertook a trip to Hong Kong and discovered they "really like each other."

In Quiapo during the early 1940s, an *estero* separated the haves from the have-nots. It was also the time of the Japanese Occupation, "and some big houses became torture chambers."

In 1944 the family moved to Malabon and were thus spared the horrors of the Battle for Manila the following year. (Other families in South Manila would not be so lucky.)

"Even if I was grateful that we hadn't witnessed any of the final carnage, I felt I had missed a part of history," the author writes. "Maybe that's why I got so interested in writing fiction based on other people's war experiences as if they were my own."

Two of Cordero-Fernando's most memorable stories are about WWII: "People in the War" and "A Wilderness of Sweets." (An excerpt from the latter story is included.)

In "Jobs We Had," the author recalls her days as a working housewife and also as a corporate wife.

In the latter capacity, she participated in the lavish party Eugenio Lopez of Meralco gave for his wife Nitang to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary; and there was champagne gushing out of a small fountain. But there is no mention of the demonstrators (including a seminarian) outside the mansion who were roughed up by the Lopez security.

During the 1970s, the 10-volume "Filipino Heritage" which Cordero-Fernando and Alfredo Roces edited, was considered "hostile to the New Society." And its launch at the Cultural Center of the Philippines was sabotaged by Malacañang, with the lights and aircon switched off.

By the time they finish this book, even readers who are not personally acquainted with Cordero-Fernando will have known her quite well. For she gives much of herself, sometimes baring much (some passages in "The Chemical Wedding" read like soft porn).

Yet she does not tell all. Presumably juicier revelations are in a sealed envelope at the Ateneo Library of Women's Writings, to be inserted into the present volume 30 years after her death.

"If you're still alive by then," she tells the reader tongue-in-cheekly, "promise to buy the new edition."

A major lesson she learned from life is that "...the only real private space is being at peace with yourself and the one you love."

This book emerges as a literary and social document of our times, written in a clear, straightforward and subjective style. It is a record of one woman writer's passage through life.

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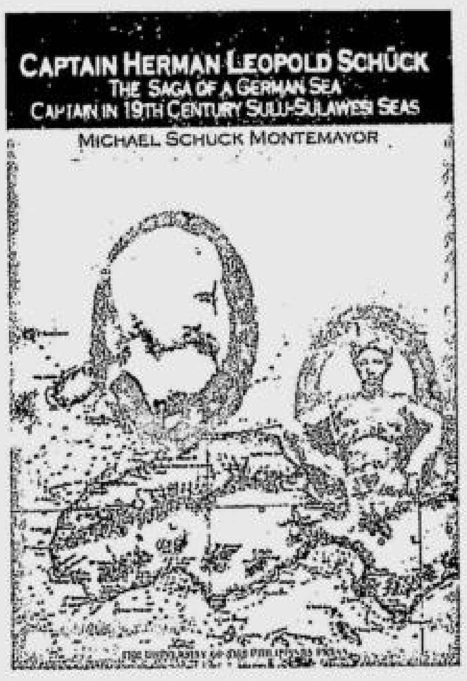
Focus on Sulu history


CAPTAIN HERMAN LEOPOLD SCHÜCK
THE SAGA OF A GERMAN SEA CAPTAIN IN 19TH CENTURY SULU-SULAWESI SEAS
MICHAEL SCHUCK MONTEMAYOR

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE Philippines Press has released "Captain Herman Leopold Schück: The Saga of a German Sea Captain in 19th-Century Sulu-Sulawesi Seas," written by Michael Schück and a contribution to Sulu and Mindanao scholarship.

The book is both a biographical study of the life of the German sea captain Herman Leopold Schück who set off to China and the Sulu archipelago during the second wave of European expansion in Asia.

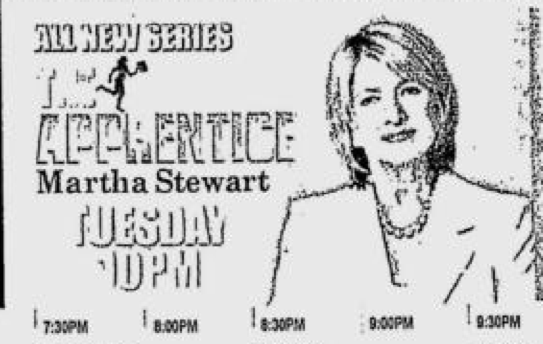
According to noted historian Samuel K. Tan, the book is "a distinctive contribution to the study of Philippine Muslim historiography... a key to the understanding of the social history and political economy of Sulu" during the period of transition from mid-19th-century Spanish rule to the end of the American regime.

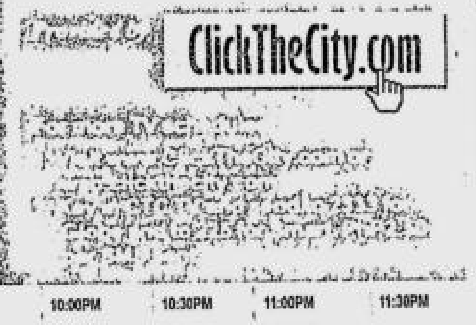
Michael Schück Montemayor worked on the book for 12 years. A great grandson of Captain Schück, he is educated at Ateneo de Manila University, University of the Philippines and Wharton. He is setting up a nonprofit organization to promote Sulu scholarship.

The book is available at the UP Press Bookstore, National Book Store and PowerBooks. Call 9266642.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE
Monday, December 19, 2005

ALL NEW SEASON
THE APPRENTICE
MONDAY 10PM
SEE IT FIRST ON
ABC





Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5			Winner TV Shopping		Speed		TNA Impact		Sentro	Friends	Guinness Book Of Record		Fear Factor		Big News	The Apprentice		Totoo TV	
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Amazing Twins	Meteor Garden Season 2	TV Patrol World	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Kampanerang Kuba	Only You	Vietnam Rose	Pinoy Big Brother	OK Fine! Whatever			Insider
AXN		SWAT Police			Maximum Exposure (Season II)		E Buzz	Amazon		24		The 4400		Numb3rs (Season 1)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 4)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 4)	
Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Megatoon Movie Barbie Of Swan Lake				Codename: Kids Next Door		The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy		Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers	Battle B-Daman	Machine Robo-Rescue	X-Men Evolution	Samurai Jack	Justice League	Static Shock	Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers
Cinema One		Moral				Andrea Paano Ba Ang Maging Isang Ina				Bcuz Of U				Narito Ang Puso Ko				Xerex	
Cinemax	The Bone Snatcher			Young at Heart				Hercules And Lost Kingdom			For Love Or Money (7:25 PM)			Snakehead Terror			Trois 3: The Escort		
CNN				Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International		World News Asia		World News	Living Golf	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
Discovery Channel		Body Works		Ancient Clues		Mythbusters 3		Walking With Prehistoric Beasts		Unsolved History				Wild Discovery		Anatomy Of A Crash		The History Of Singapore	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Lilo & Stitch	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			So Little Time		Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Ranger	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN	X-Games Files '04	Pool: Snooker Premier Snooker League '05				Boxing Series Friday Night Fights				English Premier League Highlights		Sportscenter Asia	Table Tennis '05 Killerspin	Motorsport Asia	TNA Impact		2005 WPBA Cuetec Cues Nat'l 9-BALL Championship		Sportscenter Asia
ETC		Complete Savages	Knock First	Today Weekend		Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Friends	Will & Grace	The O.C		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		ET Weekend		For Love Or Money	
EWTN	Benediction And Devotion Encore	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Bible Treasure Chest	Image Of God	St. Thomas More Faithful Statesman	Rosary With Mother Angelica	Voices On Virtue	EWTN Gallery	The Catholic Faith & Vatican II	Sunday Night With (Encore) Fr. Benedict Groeschel		Threshold Of Hope		Daily Mass (SAP) Live		Angelus (10:15PM)	Defending Life	Catholic Compass	
Fox News		Fox Report Sunday		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Bulls & Bears	Cavuto On Business	Forbes On Fox	Cashin' In	Fox & Friends				Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako	Now and Forever	Date With Tiffany		Dragonball Z	Slam Dunk	Frog Prince	24 Oras		Extra Challenge	Sugo	Encantadia	Starstruck 3	Jewel In The Palace/Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi		
Hallmark Channel	Bewitched IV	Wife Swap III		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Who's The Boss	Bewitched IV	The Nanny III	Family Law II		Wife Swap III		Mr. Saint Nick			Mcleod's Daughters IV		Family Law II (11:25PM)
HBO			Bring It On Again			The Matrix Revolutions				The School Of Rock (7:15 PM)				Anacondas: The Hunt For The Blood Orchid			Last Man Standing (10:40PM)		
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Krusada Kontra Krimen		Home Shopping Network		ME TV					IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV		South Park	Street Smarts	Wwe Heat		WWE Velocity		Cheat	Just For Laughs (Gags)	Mad TV		Sweet Spot	Comedy Central Presents	Comedy Central Presents	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Blue Collar TV	Banzai	Joe Schmo Show	
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Food 911	101 Most Awesome Moments		NY Fashion Week	Life & Style		Living Space	Style Star	Breathing Room	Genuine Article
MTV Philippines	Rockola	MTV Ask	Chart Attack		Viva La Bam	Pop Inc		MTV Hits				Massive	Get Spotted	TRL		The 70's House	Wild N' Out	Homecoming	VH1 Video Collections
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	MYXILOG	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten			Mobile MYX Top Picks	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX
National Geographic		Dangerous Encounters		Bug Attack		Snake Wranglers	Totally Wild	Top 5		Wow!		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Dangerous Encounters		Wild Sex, Deviants?/Macho Males, Femme Fatales, Swingers	
NBN				New Life TV Shopping		Teledyaryo	Divas Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Sea Games				Teledyaryo				Dial M		Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues/What Planet Are You From	Rugrats	Hey Arnold!	My Life As A Teenage Robot/Right On Top	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	SpongeBob SquarePants	Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	Drake & Josh	The Fairly Odd Parents	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Rocket Power	Chalkzone	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	The Brothers Garcia
PBO			Basta Ikaw Nanginginig Pa				Awit Ni Cecilia				Suicide Commandos				Pasan Ko Ang Daigdig				Misteryosa
Qtv		Endless Christmas (Navidad Sin Fin)	Manana (Sin Pecado Concebido)	Cabecita	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Golden Bowl	Star	Laugh To Laugh: Ang Kulit	H3O Hahaha... Over!		All In	News On Q	Liga Ng Kababaihan		Groupee TV	
RPN 9	TV Shopping		Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	As Told By Ginger	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Score Tactics	NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Simple Life 2	Cargo For Truth	
SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Sony Bmg Video			
Solar Sports		WTA '05 Advanta Philadelphia SF2				Denmark Open Women's Singles SF		Denmark Open Men's Doubles SF		Sagupaan		Sportsdesk		NBA Game Spurs @ Hornets					NBA Inside Stuff
Sports Plus				Ultimate Fighting Championship Special						NFL 2005 San Diego @ Indianapolis						Wendy's Three-Tour Challenge Day 2			
Star Movies	Eve's Christmas (2:35 PM)			Back By Midnight			Bottle Rocket (5:40 PM)			The Whole Ten Yards (7:15 PM)				The Good Shepherd			Double Impact (10:35PM)		
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Whose Line Is It Anyway?	Angel		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Friends	Married To The Kellys	Everybody Loves Raymond	King Of Queens	Becker	Monk		Friends	Married To The Kellys
Studio 23		Yugioh Duel Monster						Get Backers	Pinoy Big Brother	Wazzup Wazzup	The Swan Season 2		Tru Calling (8:20 PM)	Charmed (9:10 PM)		News Central	The West Wing		Travel Time

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Gifts for literate gourmets and gourmands

From page F1

ipino-style" is a guide to stress-free parties to celebrate special occasions in foreign places in the tradition of Filipino culture and hospitality.

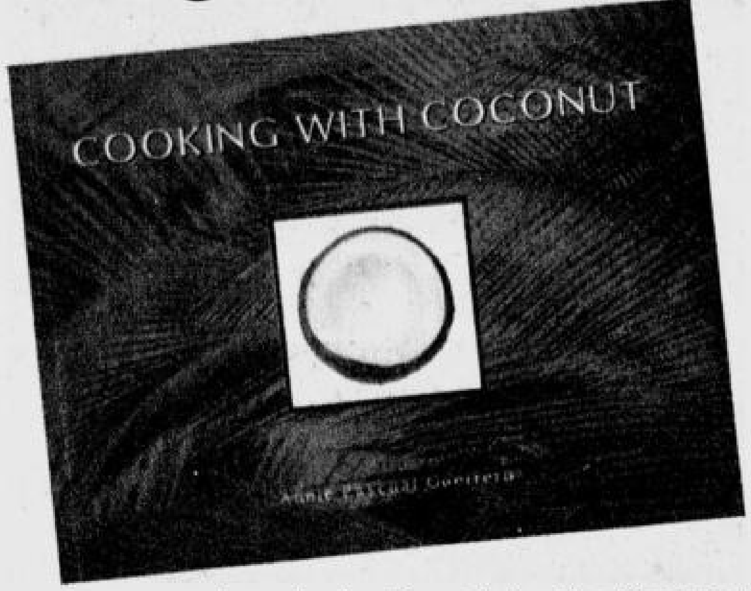
The recipes are kept as traditional as possible. Both substitutions and conventional ingredients are given, as well as both simplified and traditional methods of cooking.

"Kitchen Rescue: Excerpts from the Philippine Daily Inquirer and Then Some..."

By Reggie Aspiras

Published by Emerald Holdings, Inc.

More than just a "cookbook," this resource book is delightfully easy to read and full of recipes, culinary advice, cooking tips and tricks, phone numbers and addresses of stores and services, definitions of culinary terms, and much more!



Aspiras put together a visually delightful collection of her answers to questions sent by readers of her column in the INQUIRER, as well as recipes from her own kitchen and those of her guest chefs. The dishes range from Pinoy to international favorites.

The book also lists the culinary who, what, when, where and why. Readers become privy to kitchen secrets, such as how to keep lettuce fresh and green, the origins of dishes and gourmet tips on cooking the perfect fried chicken. A must-have for every kitchen.

"Cooking with Coconut"

By Annie Pascual Guerrero

Published by Center for Culinary Arts, Manila

The book pays tribute to one of the country's primary products, the coconut, which has served every Filipino family in more ways than one. It features various recipes using different parts of the coconut, not just its oil and milk. The recipes have been tasted by students, customers, colleagues and friends of Guerrero's, the only Filipino culinary professional certified by the International Association of Culinary Professionals of the United States.

Aside from recipes, the book also contains cooking trivia and a glossary of terms.

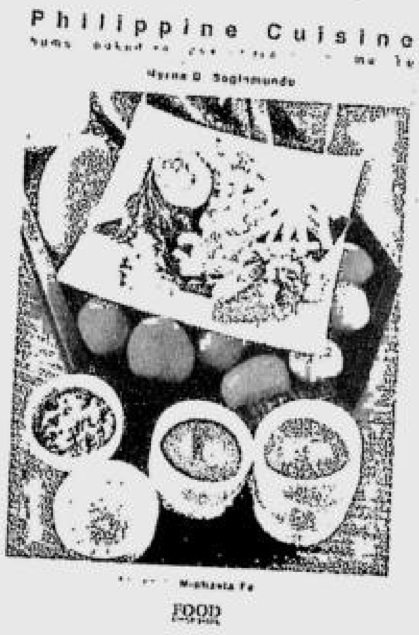
"Smart Carbs: Good-Carbohydrate Recipes for Every Lifestyle"

Published by ABS-CBN Publishing Inc.

For the calorie counter, this Metro Magazine cookbook approaches dieting from an informed, rational and balanced perspective. The sleek book offers recipes and nutrition notes to guide readers in cooking and eating smart. Nutritionist-dietitian Luchi Callanta assessed dishes prepared by Bambi Sy Gobio for nutrition and dietary values. Fitness and health expert Tina Aboitiz-Juan provides a health perspective that is enlightened and honest.

All the ingredients are available locally. Recipes are mostly Filipino but there are also Asian, Middle Eastern, European and Mediterranean dishes.

Among the interesting recipes are: *tinapang bangus*, swamp spinach and *kesong puti* in filo pouches; Thai style tuna fish cakes; coconut chicken soup; tofu salad with fried pork belly; home-made high-protein bread; vegetable couscous; sugar-free cheesecake.



"Slow Food: Philippine Culinary Traditions"

Edited by Erlinda Enriquez Panlilio and Felice Prudente Sta. Maria; published by Anvil Publishing Inc.

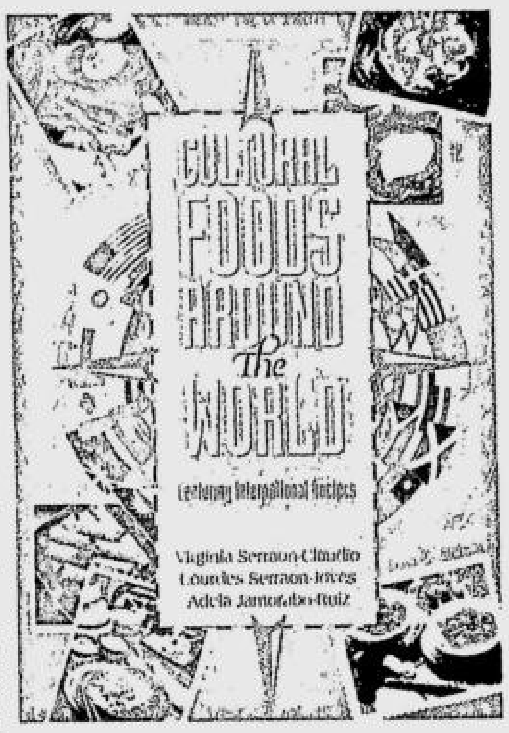
The book is a collection of 50 essays on culinary treasures handed down through generations of families. Panlilio notes, "Slow food... food prepared from scratch with no shortcuts, using only the finest ingredients acquired at the peak of their season, is a vital and valuable component of every Filipino's sense of self."

This mouthwatering book also makes readers reflect on slow/fast food. Gilda Cordero-Fernando says: "The book gives the background behind slow-cooking family recipes and traces stomach links between grandmas, moms and dads and their cooking daughters."

"Philippine Cuisine: Home-Cooked Recipes Wherever You May Be"

By Myrna D. Segismundo

Published by ABS-CBN Publishing Inc.,



This 130-page collection of selected recipes presents popular Filipino everyday dishes and day-to-day food preparation. It's filled with honest-to-goodness Pinoy recipes that work, such as Adobo, Sinigang, Lumpia, Pancit and Halo-Halo any time, any day, anywhere.

The recipes are typically Filipino popular fare served at home and in parties. Most are traditional family recipes; many of the dishes are those the author grew up with and continue to enjoy—from *pastel* to *relleno*, *lumpia* to *pastillas*, *empanada* to *achara*.

Recipes conform to cooking methods used by experienced Filipino cooks and homemakers. They have been designed to serve 4 to 6 persons with cooking techniques simplified for the home cook. Segismundo also suggests substitutes for ingredients as well as alternatives to guide cooks anywhere they are. The book features rich color photographs of the finished dishes.

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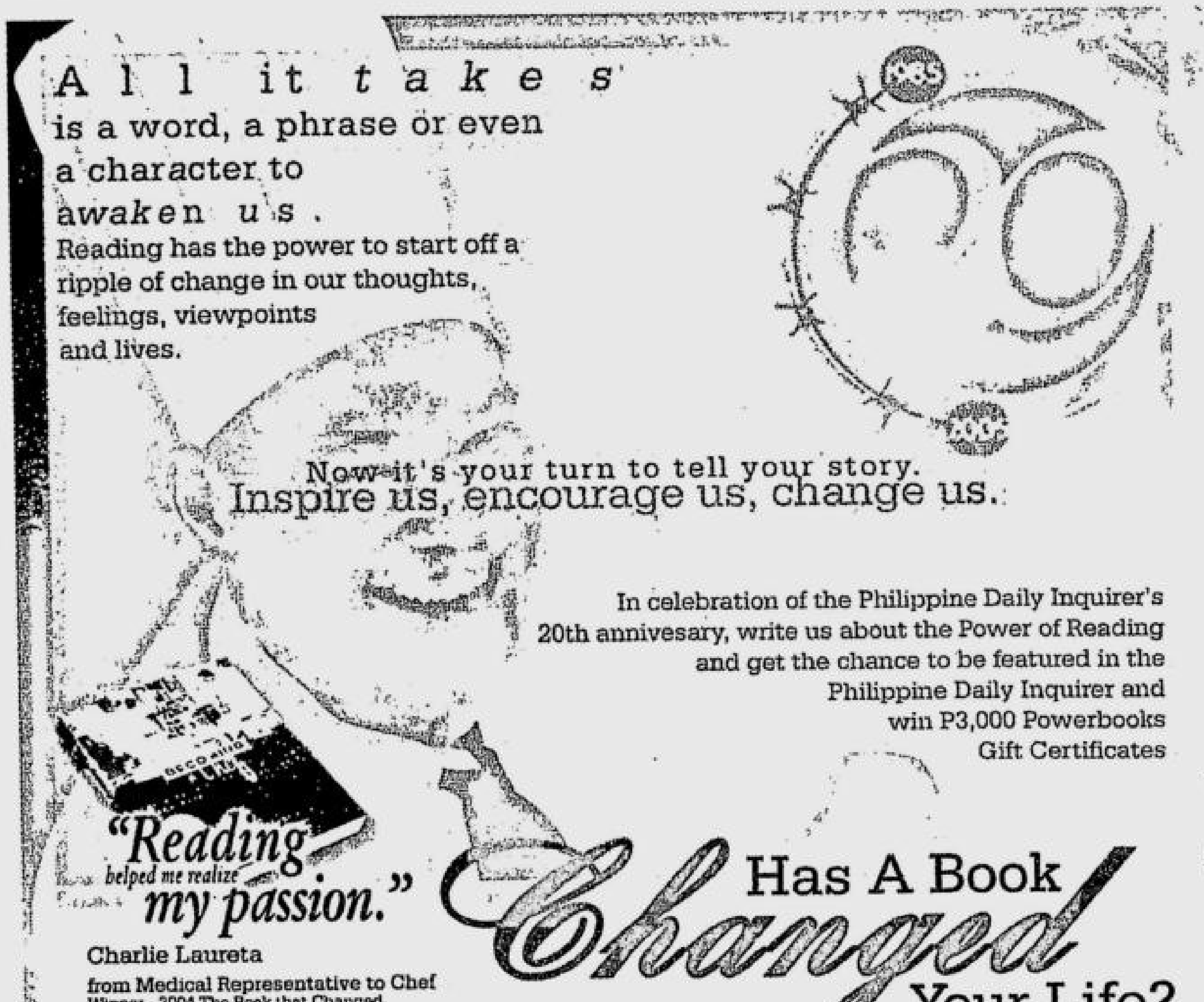
FOOD MAGAZINE releases its 10th anniversary cookbook, featuring top readers' favorite recipes that have appeared in its pages for the past 10 years.

The recipes range from the simple to the complex, from the rustic to the sublime, for simple family meals to the most festive celebrations.

Starters include the comforting Ho To Tay soup, the refreshing Mango Kani salad, and cocktail favorites such as Chicken Rumaki. For everyday main dishes, choose among many family favorites such as Chicken Navarro, ground beef adobo, or a spicy tuna casserole. Some of the more festive choices include spaghetti with four cheeses, roast tenderloin of beef, and the traditional roast turkey. Sumptuous offerings for desserts and snacks are the *buko* cream pie, the stunning hazelnut chocolate cake, and the elegant cathedral orange Bundt cake just waiting to be tried.

Food Magazine's "10th Anniversary Cookbook" and other cookbooks—"The Best of Food Magazine," "Step-by-Step Cookbook," "Special Recipe Collection," "Easy Entertaining," " Eat and Run," and "Philippine Cuisine"—are available in major bookstores nationwide. Call 4152852 or 4152272 local 4657 and 4658.


All it takes is a word, a phrase or even a character to awaken us.
Reading has the power to start off a ripple of change in our thoughts, feelings, viewpoints and lives.
Now it's your turn to tell your story.
Inspire us, encourage us, change us.
"Reading helped me realize my passion."
Has A Book Changed Your Life?

In celebration of the Philippine Daily Inquirer's 20th annivesary, write us about the Power of Reading and get the chance to be featured in the Philippine Daily Inquirer and win P3,000 Powerbooks Gift Certificates

Charlie Laureta
from Medical Representative to Chef
Winner - 2004 The Book that Changed my Life Contest

Mechanics:

1. In 150 words or less, write about how reading that book has inspired you to see life in a new way. Has it motivated you to start your own business? Challenged you to switch careers? Or transformed you for the better?
2. Submit your entry together with a photo of you holding or reading the book at the Customer Service counter of any Powerbooks branch. Photos should be in 4R size, and printed on photo paper or submitted in a CD. Mail to or drop off at Powerbooks, 2nd Level, Greenbelt 4, Ayala Center, Makati City or the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Powerbooks Promo c/o Marketing Dept., Inquirer Bldg., Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City. For inquiries, please call 757-6428 to 29
3. Announcement of the weekly winner will be published in the Lifestyle section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer every Monday.
4. All entries must follow the following format:

Name: ____________
Age: ______ Date of Birth: ______
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Title of book: ____________
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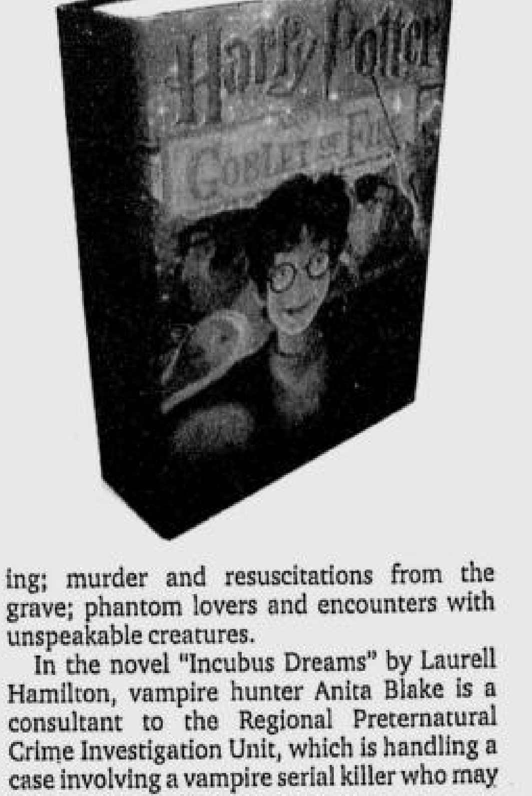
THOSE WHO CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF THE thrills in the film version of "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" should catch up on their reading. The 734-page novel by J.K. Rowling contains all the delightful detours and details that didn't make it to the movie.

Also available at all PowerBooks outlets are the other "Harry Potter" titles—"Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets," "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban," "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix," and "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince."

Harry Potter fans may likewise want to check out "Daniel Radcliffe: No Ordinary Wizard." Written by Grace Norwich, the book talks about the young actor who plays the famous boy wizard.

The books are available at PowerBooks at Greenbelt 4 (7576428 to 29), Megamall (6352898 to 99), Alabang Town Center (8505662 to 63), Glorietta (7527075), Shangri-La (6380023/25) and Robinsons Place Ermita (5233334/5243448).



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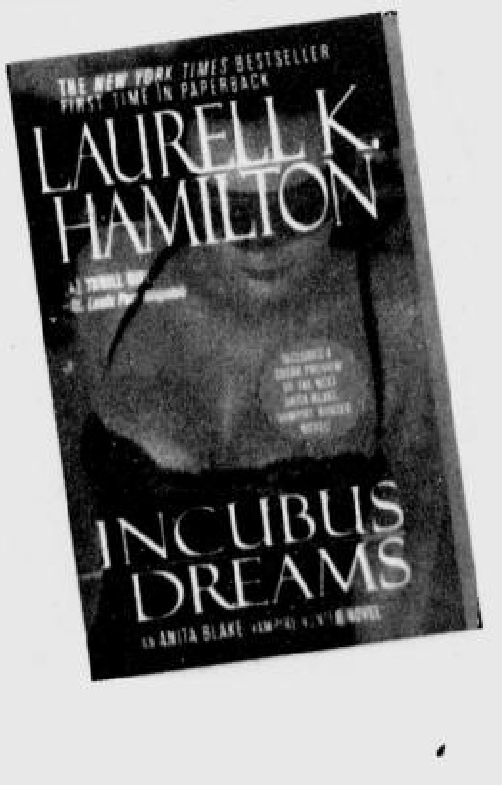
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